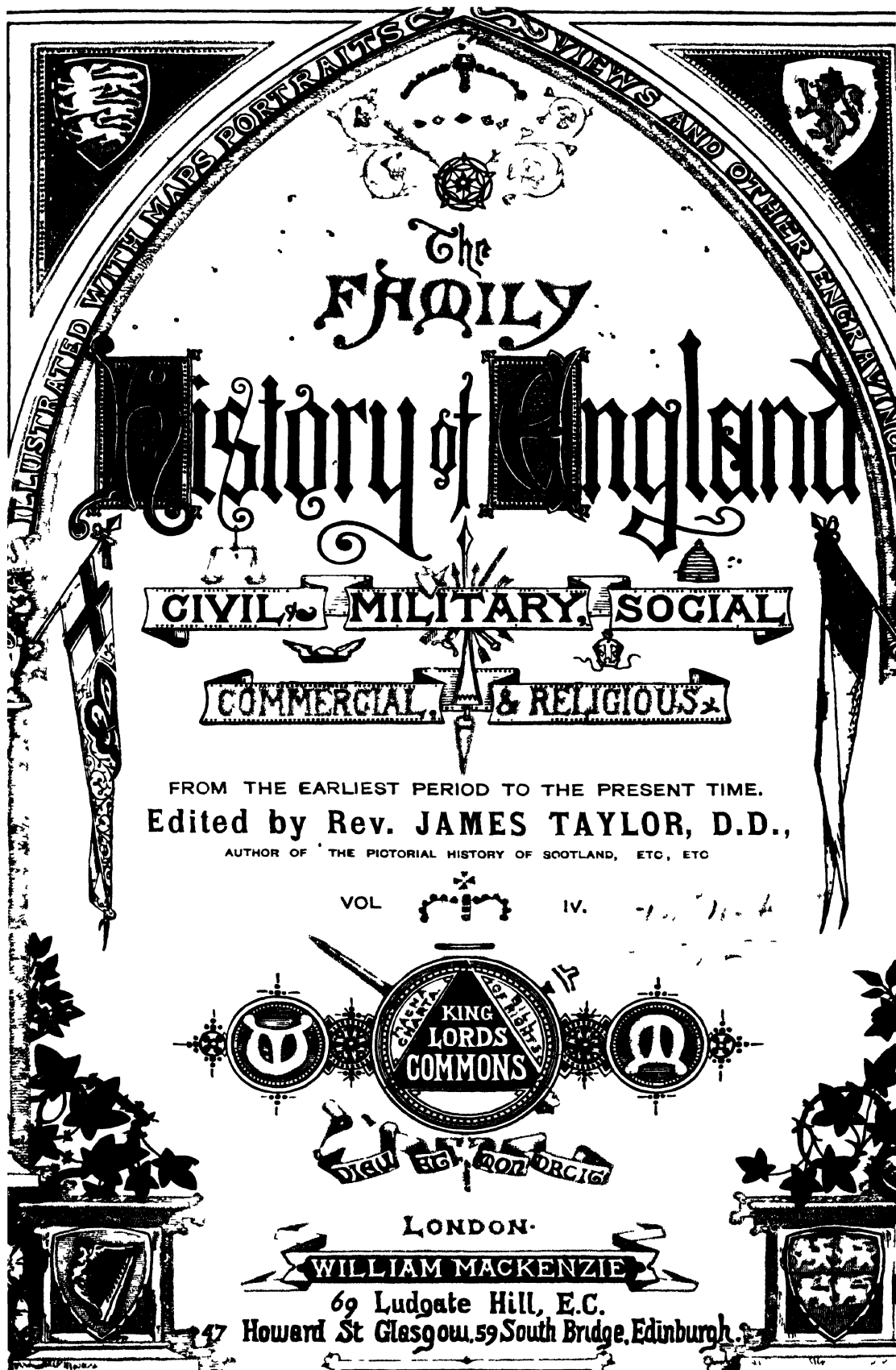




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FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME.
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a distinction between such things as they deemed sinful, and such as they considered only inexpedient. Their three champions, being requested to deliver an opinion on this point, stated eight things which they determined to be absolutely sinful and contrary to the word of God. These were, besides the surplice, kneeling at the communion, and the sign of the cross in baptism, the calling all baptized persons regenerate, administering the Lord's Supper to the impenitent sick, the general absolution, the objectionable expression in the burial service, and the demanding from preachers subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles and to the Book of Common Prayer. The controversy, it would appear, turned chiefly on the expediency of administering the holy communion to such as refused to kneel, with a reference to the text in the Epistle to the Romans, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." But in this case, as in all the former, the result was quite unsatisfactory, and the only unanimous conclusion to which the commissioners arrived was that the report to the king should be couched in the following words — "The welfare of the church, unity, and peace, and his Majesty's satisfaction, were ends upon which they were all agreed, but as to the means, they could not come to any harmony."*

On the 29th December the Convention Parliament, as it was usually called, was dissolved by the king in person, who praised the Commons for their zealous obedience, and expressed his determination to conduct his government in such a manner as to secure the concurrence of the national representatives. Regret was felt by his Majesty that his labours for the reconciliation of theological parties had not succeeded, but a hint was given, through the mouth of the chancellor, that the interests of the church would not be neglected. His lordship, on

the same occasion, made known that the embers of rebellion were not yet quite extinguished in certain quarters, and that the vigilance of administration might still be required to maintain the public tranquillity.*

It is supposed that Clarendon in these remarks alluded to an attempt which was meditated, to rescue such of the regicides as had been condemned, but not executed. Whatever may have been in his mind when he addressed the two Houses, an occurrence soon afterwards took place which seemed to justify his apprehensions. In Coleman Street there was a conventicle of fanatics, belonging to that infatuated class of believers who sighed for the establishment of the Fifth Monarchy, or reign of the saints. During a temporary absence of the king from the metropolis, Venner, a wine-cooper, who had assumed the charge of this congregation, exhorted them to take up arms in the cause of their heavenly sovereign, and to establish, by their valour, his just power and authority throughout all the nations of the earth. Excited by his eloquence and their own hopes, a detachment of them, who had already supplied themselves with weapons, attacked a body of the train-bands, whom they easily repulsed, and having signalized their triumph in the city, they withdrew towards evening to Caen Wood, between Highgate and Hampstead. The guards being called out took a number of them prisoners, and the foolish insurrection was supposed to be at an end, but Venner, whose insanity supplied the place of courage, succeeded in recruiting his ranks, and even ventured to lead his undisciplined adherents against the regular troops. Influenced by motives which rose above the limits of temporal ambition, these enthusiasts fought with a resolution which, in other circumstances, might have proved exceedingly dangerous to the cause of order. They sold their lives at a high price, inflicting nearly as much loss as they sustained; nor was it until they

* On this subject the reader will find full details in Collier, vol. ii pp. 874-885. Clarendon's Life, Neal, History of the Puritans. History of Nonconformity, p. 839. Parl. History, vol. vi p. 82. Journals of the Commons. Life of Baxter and Carwithen, vol. in p. 4.

* Clarendon's Life, p. 76. Journals of the Commons, November 28. Parl. Hist. vol. vi p. 141.

had seen more than twenty of their associates fall, that the remainder, whose wounds did not permit them to flee, surrendered their persons into the hands of the military. It was thought necessary to make an example of such desperate rebels, some of whom were condemned to death, but the miserable issue in which their enterprise terminated shook neither their belief nor confidence, most of them dying in the full assurance that the personal reign of the Messiah was about to commence in England *

These commotions, and the popular excitement which in some degree accompanied the Savoy Conference, were agreeably relieved by the coronation of the king, which was solemnized on the 23rd of April. Archbishop Juxon, though now bending under the weight of years, was able to place the crown on his Majesty's head, but retired before the conclusion of the ceremony, leaving to the bishop of London the performance of the remaining duties. The aged prelate, whose character and principles have ever been regarded with veneration, must have marked, with the deepest feelings, the contrast between the scene in which he had just taken a part, and the solemn office which he was summoned to discharge in front of Whitehall about twelve years before. The changes and chances attending the life of man could not possibly have been illustrated by events more striking.

The Restoration, which had been accomplished under auspices so favourable in England, was hailed with not less satisfaction in the northern division of the kingdom. It is remarkable that the Scots, though they were the first to draw the sword in the civil war, and bestowed all the influence attached to their cause and their arms on the disaffected party, never ceased to cherish a personal regard for the house of Stewart, viewed as their native sovereigns. Their expressions of affection for the first Charles, at the very

moment when some of their leaders were exerting all their power to oppose his interests, have been charged with insincerity, and yet there can be no doubt that the mass of the people retained an ardent love for him as an individual, and were proud of his elevation as a monarch. At his death they transferred the same warm feelings to his son, for whose rights a large body of them took up arms, and laid down their lives on the bloody field of Dunbar and at Worcester. But the bitterness of religious dissension had sunk more deeply into their hearts than among the nonconformists of the south, and their zeal, while it was considerably more hot, was less allayed by any infusion of toleration. Availing themselves of the youth and necessities of the prince, they ceased not to importune him till he gave his reluctant consent to the Covenant, and even expressed some attachment to their discipline. He was compelled to endure the full measure of their spiritual tyranny, and to experience the most mortifying proofs that, under their rule, liberty would be unknown, and the claims of conscience would be harshly contemned. Still, they beheld in the grandson of James a ruler sprung from their own lineage, and a sharer of their own blood, a circumstance which consoled them for the loss of a resident government, as well as for the severe restraint to which they had been subjected during the ascendancy of the Commonwealth. Sixty years had not worn out the remembrance of the arrogant and contemptuous treatment they had received, when they first crossed the Tweed as subjects of the same crown, nor of the jealousy inseparable from the condition of those who are united in political ties with a people richer, more powerful, and more refined than themselves. With these prepossessions, they were perhaps still more disposed than their southern neighbours to welcome the king to the throne of his ancestors, and but for their religious convictions, the harmony would not have been less complete nor less permanent.

It is remarked by a contemporary annalist

* Kennet, Register, p. 854. State Trials, vol. vi. p. 105. Heath, p. 471. Pepys, vol. i. p. 167. "This morning (January 7) news was brought to me to my bedside that there had been a great stir in the city this night by the fanatiques, who had been up and killed six or seven men."

that "upon his Majesty's happy restoration to the exercise of his government, it might have been concluded that our thoughts would have been so filled with the pleasures of freedom from tyranny in the state and schism in the church, that no room should have been left for complaints and jealousies. But people of all ranks, especially the nobility, were so exhausted by former wars, and their expectations were so raised by the number of places then vacant, and the selfish opinion of having deserved all at this prince's hand, to whom and to whose glorious father almost every considerable person pretended to have done some service, that more thought themselves disobliged by these disappointments, than happy in the general revolution, whilst those who were advanced thought they were rather paid than gratified, and, having missed greater employments, undervalued those they possessed, or became dissatisfied by seeing their enemies preferred as well as themselves " *

The earl of Lauderdale, who had shared in the sufferings of the royalists, was not unnaturally admitted to the confidence of Charles, not the less that he was not greatly recommended either by his religious principles or moral conduct. He prevailed upon the king to reduce the fortifications which had been erected by Cromwell to keep the Scots in check, and to withdraw most of the troops left by Monk when he proceeded on his memorable march southward. The next step was to summon Parliament, or rather the Committee of Estates, which had been nominated in the year 1651, and General Middleton, now raised to the peerage, was appointed commissioner, Lord Glencairn was named chancellor, Rothes, president of the council, and the earl of Crawford, treasurer. It was at first objected that the Parliament of 1650, which had authorized this committee, was not itself either free or strictly legal, because all who had served under Montrose were debarred from appearing in it, and it was, therefore, moved that no one who had

been selected by a body of men so little attached to his late Majesty should now be intrusted with the government. This motion, however, was speedily overruled, on the ground that many of the nobility had themselves been concerned in that rebellion, and had even carried arms against the royal lieutenant, though aware of his being fortified with a commission from the crown. But in whatever spirit they had originally convened, when the vigilant eye of the Protector was known to watch their proceedings, they manifested, under the direction of Middleton, the most unbounded obsequiousness. They assembled for business on the 23rd August, and, in the first instance, signalized their zeal against several officers who, in the year 1650, had deserted from the king's army, on account of the celebrated Remonstrance, which rent the presbyterian community in pieces. They also issued orders to deface the inscriptions which were on the tombs of the Rev Alexander Henderson and George Gillespie, both distinguished leaders of the Covenanters; and at the same time commanded that the celebrated work of Rutherford, entitled, "Lex Rex," should be burnt by the hands of the common hangman at the cross of Edinburgh, and at the gate of the university of St Andrews. These steps were not a little alarming to the party, who could not fail to perceive that their privileges and liberties were about to be abridged and violated by the very men who had been their most prominent supporters.

The Committee of Estates were on the 12th December relieved from their duties by a new Parliament, which had been regularly summoned to meet at the end of the year, though afterwards prorogued to the 1st of January following. The nobility and gentry appeared in great numbers on the day appointed, and never was any assembly more subservient to the power which had called them together. "For the Act of Indemnity not being yet passed, many durst not, and because of great expectations and promises many would not,

* Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland, by Sir George Mackenzie, p. 5

oppose anything that was craved, and all ranks and degrees of men had been so lately tamed into a slavish submission by the usurpers, that they were ashamed to allow less power to their own king than to a mere stranger."* They accordingly annulled at once, by what was called the "Act Rescissory," all laws which had passed since 1633, under the pretext that violence had been employed to procure the assent of the king and his father to these several statutes. Thus all the barriers which had been raised to protect the civil and religious liberties of the nation, and all the valuable privileges which had been wrested from the crown, were at one sweep completely annulled. Such a deed, as Burnet remarks, "was only fit to be concluded after a drunken bout," and he says that Sir Archibald Primrose, "the subtlest of all Lord Middleton's creatures," first suggested, "half in jest," this notorious act, which was not resolved upon, however, till the junto "had drunk higher." It was prepared in haste, as its slovenly character clearly shows, and hurried through Parliament with all possible expedition, as Middleton admits in a letter to Primrose, urging "the speedy doing of the thing."

When the Restoration took place, either through accident or design, no bill of indemnity was passed for Scotland. "It was deemed more politic for the king," says one of his apologists, "to hold over men's heads for some time the terror of punishment, till they should have made the requisite compliances with the new government." But there can be no doubt that this ungenerous policy was adopted for the purpose of taking vengeance on some of the leaders of the covenanting party. The marquis of Argyle, as he was the most powerful, so he was the first victim selected. It was an act of peculiarly base ingratitude to seek the destruction of this great noble, since it was he who had put the crown upon the king's head. But his vast power made him formidable to the government; he was the

object of bitter hatred on the part both of the king and the court, and the rapacious Middleton expected to obtain a grant of his extensive estates. It was resolved, therefore, to hunt him to death. To seize this powerful chief, however, in the midst of his devoted clansmen, would have been both difficult and dangerous. He was therefore, by a friendly letter from the king, induced to repair to London. But while he was waiting in the privy chamber at Whitehall, for permission to kiss his Majesty's hand, he was suddenly arrested and committed to the Tower. He was shortly after sent down in a ship of war to Edinburgh, to be tried by his bitterest enemies. On the 13th of February he was indicted for high treason before the Estates, which had just assembled. The charges against him extended over the whole period, from the armed rising of the Covenanters in 1638, down to Richard Cromwell's Parliament in 1659. He was accused as the prime mover of all the opposition which had been made to the proceedings of Charles I., and as an accessory to his surrender by the Scots, and his execution by the English republicans, and finally as having been guilty of a criminal compliance with the late usurpation, in opposition to the supporters of the crown. His defence was unanswerable. He pleaded that, in the part which he took in opposition to the ecclesiastical innovations of Laud, he had always acted by authority of Parliament, that all the public proceedings of the Parliament were covered by the Act of oblivion passed by Charles I. after the treaty of Ripon, and by the indemnity granted by his present Majesty in the Parliament at Stirling, that, as for his compliance with the late usurpation, he did not submit till the whole nation had acquiesced in the rule of the Commonwealth, and resistance was no longer practicable. Lord Lorne, the eldest son of Argyle, who had always opposed the government of Cromwell, procured from the king a letter ordering the crown lawyers not to prosecute the marquis for any

* Mackenzie, p. 19, who assigns motives to the principal actors not highly creditable to their patriotism.

offences committed previous to the indemnity granted at Stirling in 1651. In spite of the storming and swearing of Middleton, the Parliament, by a majority of votes, exculpated Argyle from all participation in the execution of the king. The evidence in support of the only remaining charge, that of compliance with the usurpation, was exceedingly defective, and there seemed every probability of an acquittal; when, just as the court was proceeding to give judgment, a messenger arrived from London with a packet addressed to the commissioner, which was found to contain a number of private letters which Argyle had written to Monk during the Commonwealth, expressing his attachment to the government of the Protector. Though Monk had himself been the active supporter of Cromwell, while Argyle had only passively acquiesced in his rule, yet he had the "inexcusable baseness," as Burnet says, to search out these old letters and send them down with all haste, on learning from Middleton's envoys the scantiness of the proof against Argyle. On evidence thus treacherously obtained and brought forward illegally after the case was closed, and which, as even Hume admits, could not by any equitable construction imply the crime of treason, the marquis was found guilty, and condemned to death.* He begged for a respite of ten days, in order that his sentence might be communicated to the king, but when this was refused, he saw at once that the court were bent on his destruction, and quietly remarked, "I placed the crown upon the king's head, and this is my reward! But he hastens me to a better crown than his own; nor can you deprive me of that eternal indemnity which you may require yourselves."

His execution was appointed for Monday, 27th of May, two days after his sentence

* The vindicators of Monk, admitting the "baseness" of such an act, have indignantly denied that it was committed by him, but the incontrovertible evidence of Sir George Mackenzie, recently brought to light, establishes the truth of the charge beyond a doubt. See his "Laws and Customs of Scotland in matters criminal," p. 524. Fox's *Reign of James II.* Sir George Rose's *Observations* on that work. Burnet, vol. i. p. 178. Wedrow, vol. i. p. 54.

He dined with his friends at noon; and as he was leaving his prison to go to the scaffold, he said, "I could die like a Roman, but I choose rather to die like a Christian." He spoke at some length on the scaffold in vindication of his innocence, and met his end with firmness and calm dignity. He was beheaded by the instrument called the Maiden, and his head was affixed to the tolbooth, on the spot which had been occupied by the head of Montrose*. Middleton was happily disappointed in his expectation that he would be enriched by the spoils of the man whom he had unjustly put to death under the forms of law, for the patrimonial estates of the family, and a part of the titles of the marquis, were restored to Lord Lorne, through the intercession of Lauderdale, whose wife's niece he had married.

The next victim was the Rev. James Guthrie, one of the ablest and most courageous, but also one of the most extreme, of the Scottish presbyterian clergy. He was descended of an old and honourable family, and had always been a zealous supporter of monarchy, and an intrepid opponent of Cromwell. But he was the most vehement and active of the Remonstrants, and was specially obnoxious to the court party, in consequence of his having pronounced, in 1650, the sentence of excommunication against Middleton, now the royal commissioner. He was, indeed, the author both of the Remonstrance itself, and of a pamphlet entitled "The Causes of the Lord's Wrath," which was among the charges brought against him when he was convicted for treason. His trial lasted from the 20th of February till the 11th of April; and though very infirm, the intrepid old man made a vigorous and unanswerable defence. The dominant party, however, were bent on his destruction, and he was condemned to be hanged at the cross of Edinburgh on the 1st of June, 1661; his head to be placed on the Nether Bow, his estate to be

* Scots Worthies. Wedrow, vol. i. pp. 51-157. Burnet, vol. i. p. 179.

confiscated, and his children declared incapable of enjoying any office, dignity, or profession, within the kingdom. On the scaffold "he spoke an hour," says Burnet, who saw him suffer, "with the composedness of one who was delivering a sermon, rather than his last words." Just before he was thrown off the ladder, lifting the napkin from his face, he cried, "The Covenant, the Covenant, shall yet be Scotland's reviving!"* Even Sir George Mackenzie, the "bloody Mackenzie," tacitly admits the judicial murder of this aged clergyman to be incapable of vindication. He mentions Guthrie's talents with respect, and says, "Really it was to be regretted that a more tractable and quiet person had not the keeping of his great parts and courage, for he was both the secretary and champion of his party."†

The famous Samuel Rutherford was intended to share his fate, but his death at this juncture, after a lingering illness, defeated the designs of his enemies. Though they knew he was dying, with impotent malignity they expelled him from his office of regent and professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrews, and summoned him to appear before the council on a charge of high treason. But, as Wodrow remarks, "he had a higher tribunal to appear before, where the judge was his friend."

Archibald Johnstone, Lord Warriston, having heard that he was to be brought to trial, fled to the Continent. He was tried and condemned in his absence,‡ the first example of this most unconstitutional and unjust procedure—"a step onward," as Mr. Burton remarks, "in the doctrine that parliamentary trials were bound by no law or precedent."

After the adjournment of the Parliament, Middleton proceeded to London, where a council was held for the purpose of settling the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland, but on this head the ministers of Charles

were far from being unanimous, for while Lauderdale recommended compliance with the popular feeling in the north, which ran strongly against the Anglican form of church government, his colleagues endeavoured to persuade his Majesty that the people of Scotland, generally speaking, being disgusted with the turbulence and hypocrisy of the presbyterian clergy, would gladly adopt any change which would free them from such clerical despotism. The weight of Clarendon's opinion and counsel was added to the arguments of those who favoured Episcopacy, and it was therefore resolved that the more ancient polity should be restored. In taking this step the king was guilty of flagrant dishonesty, and a deliberate breach of faith, for on the 10th day of August, 1660, he had dictated a letter to one of the presbyterian leaders, giving assurance of his intention to "protect and preserve the government of the Church of Scotland, as it is settled by law, without violation, and to countenance in the due exercise of their functions all such ministers who shall behave themselves dutifully and peaceably, as becomes men of their calling."

The Presbyterians had not been passive amid the perils with which their cause was beset, and had deputed the Rev. James Sharp, minister of Crail, afterwards archbishop of St. Andrews, to lay their claims before the young king and his councillors, and to endeavour to secure the preservation of the presbyterian form of government. If Sharp had been honest and true to their cause, he was eminently qualified for the office which he undertook for he was a person of considerable ability and learning, and of remarkable dexterity in the management of men. It is probable that at the outset he did, as he professed, exert himself honestly to support the presbyterian church, but as soon as it became evident that the king and his ministers were resolved to restore prelacy in Scotland, he abandoned the sinking cause, betrayed his trust, and assisted the high-church statesmen in carrying out

* Wodrow, book 1 section 4. *Analects*, vol. II p. 108. Burnet, vol. I p. 181.

† *Sufferings*, vol. I p. 206.

‡ *Scott's Acts*, vol. VII Appendix, p. 70.

their scheme for the re-establishment of Episcopacy.

On his return to Scotland, however, so artfully had he concealed his perfidy, that the Edinburgh Presbytery unanimously voted him thanks for his diligence and fidelity in the discharge of his mission, and no suspicion was entertained of the scheme which he had counselled, till it was ripe for execution.

Sharp brought down with him a royal proclamation, assuring the people of Scotland of the preservation "of the established worship, discipline, and government" of their church. But they were suddenly startled out of the state of security into which they were thus lulled, by the arrival in August, 1661, of a letter from the king to the privy council, in which, after alluding to his promise that he would maintain the government of the church as settled by law, he endeavoured to shelter himself from the charge of a breach of faith under the contemptible subterfuge, that the Parliament had now rescinded the Acts which established the presbyterian form of government. "We, therefore," he proceeds to say, "from our respect to the glory of God, the good and interest of the Protestant religion, from our pious care and friendly zeal for the order, unity, peace, and stability of the church, and its better harmony with the government of the churches of England, have after mature deliberation declared to those of our council here, our firm resolution to interpose our royal authority for the restoring of that church to its right government by bishops, as it was before the late troubles." A proclamation was immediately issued by the privy council, announcing the restoration of the bishops, prohibiting meetings of synods and assemblies, and forbidding all discoursing or preaching against this step on pain of imprisonment. This was followed by a second, enjoining the burghs, under the severest penalties, to elect none as magistrates who held presbyterian principles.

There can be no doubt that, as an impar-

tial writer expresses it, "Sharp's hand was in this feat;" and this is placed beyond a doubt by a letter which he sent to Middleton, taking credit as the inventor of the whole scheme. Describing an audience with the king, he says "He spoke to me of the method to be used for bringing about our church settlement, and bade me give my opinion of a present expedient, which, when I had offered, he was pleased to approve, so did the bishops of London and Worcester; and after consultation with our lords, it was agreed that Lauderdale and I should draw a proclamation from the king, to be sent to your grace, with which I trust you will be satisfied, and with submission to your grace's opinion, I should think the time for our settling will be more seasonable and proper after that your grace hath come hither, and so ordered the way of it as that the perfecting of the work may be upon your hand, from whom it had its beginning, and under whose countenance and protection it must thrive and take rooting. Your grace knoweth the work is of great consequence, and will not want its difficulties, which can only be overcome by your prudence and resolution. Many things are previous to the ordering and signing of it, and till they be moulded, the proclamation will suffice to the disposing of minds to acquiescence to the king's pleasure, which your grace will be able to put into execution with fewer inconveniences than if the king should presently declare."*

Episcopacy having thus become once more the established religion of Scotland, the appointment of suffragan bishops became necessary to complete the ecclesiastical arrangements. Sharp, as an appropriate reward for his services, was appointed archbishop of St Andrews and primate; Fairfoul was nominated to the see of Glasgow, Hamilton became bishop of Galloway, Leighton of Dunblane; and Sydserf, formerly bishop of Galloway, the only one of the old Scottish prelates who survived at the

* Letter from original in British Museum, Burton, vol. vii p. 419.

Restoration, was promoted to the see of Orkney. The four ministers now selected for the prelatical office, were required to repair to England for episcopal consecration, that, as Kirkton remarks, "being a flower not to be found in a Scottish garden" Hamilton and Fairfoul had received priests' orders before the abolition of prelacy in Scotland; but Sharp and Leighton had to acknowledge the nullity of their presbyterian ordination, and submit to the degradation of receiving re-ordination at the hands of an English bishop. Even Sharp seems to have felt a touch of shame at this insult, and his arguments against it were supported by the fact, that the validity of presbyterian orders was acknowledged by the English bishops in the case of Spottiswood and his associates, who were appointed to the episcopal office in 1610. Sheldon, bishop of London, however, peremptorily insisted that the two Scotch ministers must either renounce their presbyterian ordination or go without their episcopal ordination. "So," says Kirkton, "they were content rather to deny themselves to be presbyters, than not to be received bishops." On which Sheldon sarcastically remarked, that "it seemed to be the Scots fashion to scruple at every thing, and to swallow every thing." The ceremony of consecrating the newly appointed bishops was performed with great splendour in Westminster Abbey, on the 15th of December, 1661. On their return to Scotland they entered the capital in a kind of triumphal procession, attended by a number of the needy nobles, and were welcomed in state by the city magistrates in their official robes. The chief officers of state entertained them at a series of magnificent banquets, and treated them with every mark of external respect, for the purpose of impressing the people with a lofty notion of the dignity and power of the restored hierarchy.

The characters of the men who were thus suddenly elevated to the highest offices in the Scottish church, were by no means fitted

to gain the confidence of the nation. Sharp was specially obnoxious, as a renegade and a traitor. Fairfoul, archbishop of Glasgow, was, according to Burnet, "a facetious man, insinuating and crafty; but he was a better physician than a divine. He had not only sworn the Covenant, but had persuaded others to do it." Hamilton, the new bishop of Galloway, was originally episcopal minister of Cambusnethan, but on the abolition of prelacy he retained his office, conformed to the presbyterian system, and became a most zealous supporter of the Covenant. Leighton, who became bishop of Dunblane, presented a marked contrast to his associates, and was as conspicuous for the sanctity of his character, as for the moderation of his opinions. He had little sympathy with such men as Sharp and Fairfoul, and on their ostentatious entry into the capital, he quitted them in disgust before reaching the city, and entered it as privately as possible. He had great misgivings respecting the restoration of Episcopacy in Scotland, and often said to Burnet, "That in the progress of that affair, there appeared such cross characters of an angry Providence, that how fully soever he was satisfied in his own mind as to Episcopacy itself, yet it seemed that God was against them, and that they were not likely to be the men to build up his church, so that the struggling about it seemed to him like a fighting against God. He who had the greatest hand in it [Sharp] proceeded with so much dissimulation, and the rest of the order were so mean and selfish, and the earl of Middleton with the other secular men that conducted it were so openly impious and vicious, that it did cast a reproach on every thing relating to religion, to see it managed by such instruments."*

On the day after the entrance of the bishops into the capital (8th May, 1662) the second session of the Parliament commenced. A privy council was formed on the model of the old "Committee of Estates," with this important difference that it was created by

* Kirkton's History, p. 137.

* History of his Own Times, vol. i. p. 201.

the Crown, not by the Estates themselves, and was virtually invested with the supreme powers of Parliament during the intervals between the sessions. An Act was passed abolishing the authority of presbyteries and of provincial and general assemblies, and restoring the bishops to their ancient privileges and prerogatives, but at the same time investing them with far more ample authority over their clergy than was possessed by their predecessors. The Covenants were declared unlawful, null and void; and whatever might tend to excite dissatisfaction with his Majesty's supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs or with the episcopal government, was to be punished as seditious. An Act was also passed, requiring every man who assumed an office of trust to declare that he considered it unlawful for subjects, under any pretext whatever, to enter into covenants, or to take up arms against their sovereign; that he disowned as seditious all that had been done by petition or remonstrance during the late troubles; and that he regarded the oaths taken in connection with the Covenants as unlawful oaths, which were not binding on any of the subjects of the realm. The right of patronage was restored. The ministers who had been appointed since its abolition were deprived of their benefices, unless they should procure within four months a presentation from the patron, and collation from the bishop of the diocese.

In Ireland matters proceeded towards a settlement with greater speed, though not perhaps with a greater regard to conflicting claims, than in the counties north of the Tweed. A Convention of Estates met at Dublin on the 7th of February, 1660; and after choosing Sir James Barry for their chairman, they proceeded to business, by asserting an entire independence of England. It soon appeared that the majority were in favour of monarchical government; and hence, in defiance of the Council of State, now under the direction of Lambert, they concerted measures for the restoration of the exiled king. The whole nation ran with their wonted ardour into this measure,

and Charles was proclaimed at Dublin on the 14th of May. Sending Lord Broghill and Sir Charles Coote as their commissioners, they besought his Majesty to call a Parliament consisting of Protestants, to appoint a chief governor and council, to grant a general pardon and indemnity, a confirmation of judicial proceedings, and above all, to give authority for settling the estates of the natives who had been transplanted into Connaught. But these proposals could not be carried into effect without exciting much dissatisfaction; for the Irish who had been expelled by Cromwell still entertained the hope of being restored to their lands; while the soldiers, and other adventurers into whose hands they had fallen, were disposed to add to the advantages of actual possession the claims of legal right.

It was not unfortunate for the king that the urgency of affairs in England prevented his government from directing their attention, in the first instance, to the condition of his Irish subjects; for as it would have been very difficult to exercise strict justice towards all, so would it have proved impossible to give satisfaction to any. He began by appointing the earls of Orrery and Mountrath, together with Sir Charles Eustace, as lords justices of the country, investing them with suitable power to decide on the pretensions of the several classes of men who demanded the security or the restoration of property. Meanwhile the despair of the parties themselves suggested a scheme of adjustment, which the sovereign authority might not otherwise have been able to accomplish. The adventurers, as they were called, as well as the military settlers to whom grants had from time to time been made, concluding that any security recognized by law would be preferable to their present tenure, proposed, as the basis of a new arrangement, that every one of them should relinquish a fourth part of his claims, in order to raise a fund for indemnifying, to a certain extent, such of the old Irish as were thought worthy to get back their estates. His Majesty received the proposition

with the greatest satisfaction; and after some delay an Act of Settlement was passed, which contributed somewhat to establish quiet in the eastern and northern parts of the kingdom. In the west and south a gloomy silence prevailed; the inhabitants, though far from being contented with this arbitrary distribution of national property, were either afraid or unwilling to disturb the public peace; and the provisional government, eager to realize the king's beneficent intentions towards all who were loyal or even quietly disposed, wisely shut their eyes to such symptoms of disaffection as they could safely overlook. On this occasion the marquis of Ormonde received a grant of all the lands which had belonged to his ancestors; a deed of gratitude to a noble person, who had served the king and his father with unexampled honour, fidelity, and attachment *

It was the hard fate of Charles to be called upon to reconcile impossibilities; to reward the adherents of his cause, without exciting the resentment of those at whose expense such an act of gratitude must be performed; and to punish the enemies of royalty, without creating such a degree of reaction as would necessarily endanger his throne. Though the kingdom presented everywhere the appearance of tranquillity, the different parties continued to look on each other with jealousy and fear. That there were many who, if they had possessed the means, were sufficiently inclined to overturn the government, cannot be doubted; and these, by the imprudence of their language, might occasionally minister just cause of suspicion to the members of the cabinet; but, at the same time, there were also many who made it their business to discover proofs of guilt in conduct which was either innocent or indifferent, and who constantly besieged the council with the history of their alarms and with hints of treason. Most of these persons met with deserved neglect; but as greater credit was thought

due to some, their discoveries were communicated to Parliament, and arrests sometimes followed. It has been asserted that these plots had no real existence, but were fabricated by the ingenuity of Clarendon, who sought, it is said, by encouraging unfounded apprehensions, to procure the sanction of the legislature to the measures which he meditated against the nonconformists. But it has been urged in reply, that the authors of this charge, so disgraceful to his character, were men whose sufferings on account of religion made them his enemies, and who never supported their assertions with any satisfactory proof. Nor is it undeserving of remark that, at the very same moment, the royalists suspected the chancellor of a secret connection with the republicans, because he received their informations with an air of coldness, and even with expressions of disbelief *

The new Parliament, which assembled on the 8th of May, 1661, was even more furiously loyal than its predecessor, and contained a much larger proportion of ultra-royalists; no more than forty or fifty of the presbyterian party having been returned to the House of Commons. This Parliament, which, unfortunately for the welfare of the country, sat much longer than the famous Long Parliament, ultimately received the well-merited appellation of the "Pension Parliament." The House of Commons first of all adopted a resolution that all their members, under pain of exclusion, should by a certain day receive the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. They next, in concert with the upper House, condemned the Solemn League and Covenant to be burned by the common hangman. They declared that the sole and supreme command of the militia, and of all forces by sea and land, was vested in the crown, and that it was unlawful to take up arms against the king in any case whatever. They, of course,

* *The Continuation of Clarendon's Life*, pp. 115-17. Carte, *Ormonde*, 1660. *Maspherson, History*, vol. i. p. 28.

* *Langard*, vol. xii. p. 34. *Menzies*, Account. *Lansdowne MSS* 998 f. 346. We have already alluded to the charges of Lord Dover, in his *Historical Inquiries* respecting Clarendon.

restored the bishops to their seats in the upper House. They increased the severity of the law of-treason, and they materially curtailed the right of petitioning the king or Parliament, by enacting that no petition should have more than twenty signatures, unless by permission of three justices of the peace, or the majority of the grand jury.

The royalists had a decided preponderance throughout the country generally, but there could be no doubt that in cities and boroughs the popular cause was supported by a powerful majority. For the purpose of abridging their rights and destroying their ascendancy, the Corporation Bill was enacted, which required that all members of corporations should, besides taking the oath of supremacy, swear that it was not lawful under any pretence to bear arms against the king, and that the Solemn League and Covenant was illegal. The Act likewise provided that no person should be eligible for a municipal office, who had not, within the year preceding his election, taken the sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the Church of England.

A bill was also brought in and passed restoring the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the prelates, two provisions being subjoined; one forbidding the use of the *ex-officio* oath, and another preserving unimpaired the royal supremacy. Another, and much more important statute, the Act of Uniformity, which in all probability emanated from Lord Clarendon, was drawn up by Sergeant Keeling, a violent and unscrupulous tool of the chancellor, and was introduced into the House of Commons on the 29th of June. It was read a third time and passed on the 9th of July; but though it reached the upper House next day, its discussion was delayed for more than four months, in all probability to allow time for the restoration of the bishops to their seats in the upper House, and the revision of the Prayer-Book by the Convocation. The work was completed about the end of December, within a month of its commencement. - About six hundred alterations were made in the

body of the volume, most of them being of little importance, but some of them adapted to render the Prayer-Book more distasteful than before to the Puritans. A number of new collects were introduced, with occasional prayers in the Visitation of the sick, the General Thanksgiving, and the Prayers for all sorts and conditions of men; and that for the high court of Parliament, in which the profligate monarch was styled "our most religious king," an epithet which, according to Burnet, "gave great offence, and occasioned much indecent raillery." A fierce contest took place respecting the reading lessons in the church service from the Apocrypha, to which the Puritans strongly objected; but the high church party prevailed, and Andrew Marvel tells a story of a jolly doctor of divinity coming out with a face beaming with joy, shouting, "We have carried it for Bel and the Dragon!"

The Common Prayer-Book, thus revised and altered, was unanimously adopted by both Houses of Convocation on the 20th of December; and having been approved of by the king, was transmitted to the House of Peers on the 24th of February, 1662, along with a message from his Majesty, recommending that the book so altered should be that "which, in and by the intended Act of Uniformity, shall be appointed to be used by all that officiate in all cathedrals and collegiate churches and chapels, &c, and in all parish churches of England and Wales, under such sanctions and penalties as the Parliament shall think fit."

The Bill of Uniformity alluded to by the king was read a second time by the Lords on the 17th of January, 1662, and referred to a select committee, by which "divers amendments and alterations" were made in the measure. Some of these, such as the substitution of the Feast of St. Bartholomew for Michaelmas, as the time when the Act should come in force (because the tithes were commonly due at Michaelmas), were intended to add to its severity. Others, such as the clause empowering the king to

make such provision for any of the deprived clergy as he should see fit, and the proviso for dispensing with the cross and surplice, were designed to mitigate its rigour. When the bill was returned to the Commons, they readily accepted the harsh amendments of the Peers, and added others of their own, so as to render the bill more intolerable than it had been before. But all the amendments which had been introduced out of sympathy for the Puritans, or a desire to soften the severity of its penalties, were struck out. After a conference between the two Houses, these alterations were adopted by the Lords, and the bill received the royal assent on the 19th of May.

This famous Act made a considerable change in the constitution of the English church. "The insisting upon episcopal ordination in every case, as essential to the conducting of public service and to the preaching of the gospel, certainly cut off the English church more completely than before from fellowship with other reformed churches; and in consequence of another provision, for a certain period the pastoral office became dependent on the taking of a political oath, to which some approving of her doctrine and her discipline might conscientiously object. The church also stood pledged to the maintenance of civil despotism. Under pretence of reprobating the course pursued under the Commonwealth, a dogma was imposed upon the ministers of religion, which, if believed, would effectually prevent any resistance to the designs of an arbitrary monarch, even if he should lend himself to the overthrow of the church itself. The Act of Uniformity added the requirement of 'unfeigned assent and consent' to everything contained in the Prayer-Book. By such alterations the Church of England became increasingly exclusive and Erastian in its principles, and less Protestant and liberal in its spirit."*

The responsibility for the Act of Uniformity rests mainly with the royalist party in the House of Commons, though the

bishops and Clarendon must bear a considerable share of it. But, strange to say, the Roman Catholics concurred in the passing of the Act, though of course from different motives. Finding from the temper of the nation that no favour would be extended to them as a separate sect, they were not unwilling that a large body of Protestants should suffer along with them the penalties attached to nonconformity. With this view they lent their aid towards the passing of an Act, the operation of which they well knew would certainly alienate the Presbyterian from the Episcopalian, and probably lead to the introduction of a general indulgence on behalf of all classes of dissenters.

It was on this principle that we are to account for the fact, that the duke of York and the Roman Catholic peers united in supporting all the provisions for uniformity.

The king himself must be regarded as the head of the Roman Catholic party. His consent to the measure was based on the crooked policy just mentioned. It was suggested to him that he might exercise, on behalf of the Roman Catholics, the Independents, and Presbyterians, that dispensing power which was understood to be lodged in the crown, and which had frequently been called into action by his two immediate predecessors on the throne. To meet the views of those members of his cabinet who were friendly to this policy, he prepared a declaration in which he expressed his intention of removing from his government the scandal of intolerance, and from his own character the imputation of insincerity. He was aware that the Act of Uniformity was regarded by many as a proof of his being at once faithless and unprincipled; but he urged in his defence that, having by such means provided for the settlement of the church, he certainly intended to fulfil his promise of securing relief to those who, through scruples of conscience, refused to conform. For this purpose he would make it his especial care to solicit from Parliament a formal licence to exercise with more universal satisfaction that power

* Stoughton, vol. iii. p. 247

of dispensing with penal laws, which he conceived to be inherent in the kingly office. He also knew that he was suspected by more than one of the contending parties of being inclined to popery; an artifice by which he alleged many well-meaning Protestants had been seduced to bear arms against his father, and which was now brought forward with intentions equally disloyal. In reply to this insinuation, his Majesty remarked that he had given convincing proofs, under the most trying circumstances, of his firm adhesion to the reformed faith; yet he could not but feel that the greater part of the English Catholics had clung, at the risk of their lives and fortunes, to the cause of royalty and of the church, against those who, under the name of Protestants, employed fire and sword for the destruction of both, and therefore he openly avowed that he did not mean to exclude members of the Romish communion from some share of that indulgence which he had promised to tender consciences. It would be unjust, he maintained, to refuse to those who had deserved well, the boon which was granted to those who had merited reproof, and he did not conceal that the laws against Roman Catholics were so rigorous, that to execute them would do violence to his nature. But he warned the adherents of the exploded belief that they were not to presume so much on his goodness as to look for a full toleration, or to scandalize Protestants by the open practice of their worship; otherwise they would find that he knew as well how to be severe when wisdom required it, as to be merciful when charity and a sense of merit claimed indulgence from him.*

This tenderness towards dissentients, being little suited either to the temper of the times or the circumstances of the nation, was not encouraged by Parliament. The people at large, too, were unable to comprehend how an attachment to Protestantism could be reconciled with a desire to grant

any degree of indulgence to Roman Catholics. Both Houses expressed a fixed resolution to withstand any bill having such an object; and when one was actually introduced into the upper House, the opposition was so violent that the king was obliged to acquiesce in the relinquishment of the measure. The conduct of Clarendon on this occasion withdrew from him, to no small extent, the friendship and confidence of his master; and he admits that, among the mischiefs which resulted from it, was the prejudice and disadvantage which the bishops experienced from the king and the court. "For from that time the king never treated any of them with that respect as he had done formerly, and often spoke of them too slightly; which easily encouraged others not only to mention their persons very negligently, but their function, and religion itself as an invention to impose upon the free judgments and understandings of men."

The Act of Uniformity, comprehending as it did not only beneficed clergymen, but lecturers and all other descriptions of ministers, at once expelled from the Church of England the last particle of Presbyterianism and Puritanism. "The presbyterian ministers," says Neal, "had only three months to consider what to do with themselves and their families. There were several consultations, both in city and country, to know each other's sentiments; and it happened here, as it did afterwards about taking the oaths to William and Mary: some who persuaded their brethren to dissent complied themselves, and got the others' livings. It is not to be supposed they all had the same scruples: some could not in conscience comply with the very form of the hierarchy; great numbers scrupled at the business of reordination, which implied a renouncing the validity of their former ministrations. But that which dissenters of all denominations refused, was giving their assent and consent to all and everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer. This they apprehended to be more than was due to

* The declaration is to be found in Kennet, Register, p 848; and some remarks on it in Lingard, vol. xii. p 108.

* Clarendon, p 431.

any human composure."* Richard Baxter and others resigned their livings immediately after the passing of the Act, by way of making distinct proclamation to the rest of their body, of the resolution to which they had come. Most of the ejected ministers, however, preached their farewell sermons on the Sunday immediately preceding the 24th of August. It is asserted by Neal that on that fatal day about two thousand of the clergy resigned their livings in the national church rather than do violence to their consciences—"an act," says Hallam, "to which the more liberal Anglicans, after the bitterness of immediate passions had passed away, have accorded that praise which is due to heroic virtue in an enemy. It may be justly said," he adds, "that the episcopal clergy had set an example of similar magnanimity in refusing to take the Covenant. Yet as that was partly of a political nature, and those who were ejected for not taking it might hope to be restored, through the success of the king's arms, I do not know that it was altogether so eminent an act of self-devotion as the presbyterian clergy displayed on St. Bartholomew's-day† Both of them afford striking contrasts to the pliancy of the English church on the greater question of the preceding century, and bear witness to a remarkable integrity and consistency of principle."‡

When the new Parliament first assembled on the 8th of May, Charles, after drawing the attention of the members to other matters of public concern, and more especially to a faithful observance of the Act of Indemnity recently passed, thought proper to advert to his own marriage. "I cannot conclude," said he, "without telling you some news that I think will be very acceptable to you; and therefore I should think myself unkind and ill-natured if I did not impart it to you. I have been often put

in mind by my friends that it is now high time to marry, and I have thought so myself ever since I came into England; but there appeared difficulties enough in the choice, though many overtures have been made to me; and if I should never marry till I could make such a choice against which there could be no foresight of any inconvenience that may ensue, you would live to see me an old bachelor, which I think you have no desire to see. I can now tell you, not only that I am resolved to marry, but whom I resolve to marry, if God please; and towards my resolution I have used that deliberation, and taken that advice, as I ought to do in an affair of that importance; and, trust me, with a full consideration of the good of my subjects in general as of myself. It is with the daughter of Portugal."

The basis of this alliance was laid much deeper than the personal inclinations of Charles. It had been for some time the avowed policy of England to support the interests of the Portuguese in opposition to the pretensions of Spain, and the example which had been set by Cromwell on this head was followed by the legitimate monarch, though less prepared to prosecute it with vigour. The prosperity of our merchants in the East and West Indies was thought to have a close dependence on the government of Lisbon; for the Spaniards, who had still some settlements in the great Indian Archipelago, continued also to maintain certain claims upon Jamaica. These considerations, too, derived some weight from the necessities of the king; for Catharine was to bring with her, in the form of dowry, the sum of five hundred thousand pounds, besides a formal permission to occupy Bombay and the fortress of Tangier, on the coast of Africa. The relations between France and Spain at the same period justified, in the mind of Charles, the decision recommended to him upon other grounds. Louis XIV., who had just ascended the throne, had sagacity enough to perceive that a marriage treaty between the court of Madrid and the king of England would almost necessarily

* History of the Puritans, vol. iii. p. 118.

† It should be added that the Long Parliament, as Macaulay remarks, had at least allowed the divines whom it ejected a sufficient provision to keep them from starving, and this example the Cavaliers, intoxicated with animosity, had not the justice and humanity to follow.

‡ Constit. Hist. vol. ii. p. 88.

involve conditions detrimental to the influence, and even to the possessions of his crown. He failed not, therefore, to negotiate, through a private-channel, with his royal brother; to insinuate his dislike of the Spaniards; and to advocate the independence of Portugal. On the 20th of May the ill-fated Catharine arrived at Portsmouth, where she was received with due pomp by her husband, whose affections she never possessed, and from whom she never could attain even a respectful deference.*

The irrational and furious loyalty of the Commons was still unabated, and they now began to clamour for more blood. Colonels Okey and Barkstead, and Miles Corbet, a member of the Long Parliament, three of the regicides, who had fled to Holland, on the demand of the English ambassador, Downing, were given up by the States. Downing had once been chaplain to Okey's regiment, and had afterwards been Cromwell's ambassador at the Hague; Pepys terms him "a perfidious rogue." He employed a disgraceful artifice to obtain possession of his victims, who had once been his friends and patrons. They were executed at Tyburn, and died glorying in the good old cause. Sir Henry Vane and General Lambert, who had been excepted from the Act of Indemnity, still lay in prison, and it was now resolved to sacrifice them as victims upon the altar of revenge. The Convention Parliament had recommended them to mercy, and the king had promised to spare their lives. But Charles never respected a promise when it appeared to be for his interest to break it, and he now showed great eagerness in hunting Vane to death.

This famous republican statesman had lived in strict retirement during the last years of the Protectorate, and devoted himself to philosophical and religious studies. He published in 1656 "The Retired Man's Meditation," an elaborate treatise, characterized both by piety and genius, illustrative of

his views on religion and philosophy; and a political treatise, entitled "A Healing Question propounded and resolved," &c, which provoked the anger of Cromwell, and led to the imprisonment of the intrepid author in Carisbrooke Castle. He speedily regained his liberty, however; and after the death of the Protector he was elected a member of the Parliament summoned by Richard Cromwell. On the abdication of Richard, Vane assisted in the resuscitation of the Long Parliament. Upon the Restoration, knowing that he had taken no share in the trial or death of Charles I, and relying on the indemnity promised by the new king in his declaration from Breda, Sir Henry made no attempt to escape, but continued quietly to reside at Hampstead. He was allowed to remain unmolested for about five weeks, when he was arrested and committed to the Tower, whence he was carried from prison to prison for two years. About the end of May, 1662, he was brought up to London from a lonely fortalice or block-house in one of the Scilly islands, and arraigned before the court of King's Bench. The indictment charged him with compassing the death of the king, but the evidence adduced on his trial only proved that he had held office under the Commonwealth, that he had been a member of the council of State in 1651; and had belonged to the committee of Safety in 1659. He defended himself so ably and conclusively, that the counsel for the prosecution were reduced to silence, but the chief justice, Foster, muttered, "Though we know not what to say to him, we know what to do with him." To make the condemnation and sentence of Vane the more flagrantly iniquitous, the king, who had given a solemn promise to spare the life of the indomitable republican if he should be condemned, wrote to Clarendon, saying, "Vane is too dangerous a man to let live, if we can honestly put him out of the way."

His execution was appointed to take place on Tower Hill on the 14th of June. At an early hour he took leave of his wife

* Carte's *Ormonde*, vol. ii. p. 254. D'Estrades, vol. i. pp 157-194. Clarendon, *State Papers*.

and children,* and of a few steadfast friends, who were not afraid to brave the hatred of the government by showing their sympathy for its victim. He entreated them not to mourn for him. "I know," he said, "that a day of deliverance for Sion will come. I die in the certain faith and foresight that this cause shall have its resurrection in my death. My blood will be the seed sown by which this glorious cause will spring up, which God will speedily raise. As a testimony and seal to the justness of that quarrel, I leave now my life upon it as a legacy to all the honest interest in these three nations." The tops and windows of the houses commanding a view of the place of execution were crowded with spectators, who expressed their deep sympathy with him, crying aloud, "The Lord go with you; the great God of heaven and earth appear in you and for you"—signs of popular feeling which the sufferer gratefully acknowledged, "pulling off his hat and bowing." When asked how he did, he answered, "Never better in all my life," and on the scaffold his noble bearing so affected the spectators, that they could scarcely believe "the gentleman in the black suit and cloak, with a scarlet silk waistcoat (the victorious colour) showing itself at the breast, was the prisoner." "It was observed," says Burnet, "that the dying speeches of the regicides had left impressions on the hearers that were not at all to the advantage of the government," and therefore, to prevent the effect which might have been produced on the public mind by the dangerous eloquence of Vane, his voice was drowned by frequent interruptions from the sound of drums, which the bishop terms "a new and very indecent practice." When the prisoner attempted to describe the treatment he had received from his judges, Sir John Robinson, the lieutenant of the Tower, interrupted him, exclaiming

* In a letter to his wife he makes this striking remark — "This dark night and black shade which God hath drawn over his work in the midst of us, may be, for aught we know, the ground colour to some beautiful piece that he is now exposing to the light."

with great fury, "It is a lie: I am here to testify that it is a lie. Sir, you must not rail at your judges." Vane calmly replied, "God will judge between you and me in this matter. I speak but matter of fact, and cannot you bear that?" Pepys, who was an eye-witness of the scene, says, "He made a long speech, many times interrupted by the sheriff and others there; and they would have taken his paper out of his hand, but he would not let it go. But they caused all the books of those that writ after him to be given to the sheriff, and the trumpets were brought under the scaffold that he might not be heard." This disgraceful conduct "bred great confusion and dissatisfaction to the spectators, seeing a prisoner so strangely handled in his dying words." Before receiving the last stroke Vane exclaimed, "I bless the Lord who hath accounted me worthy to suffer for his name. Blessed be the Lord that I have kept a conscience void of offence to this day. I bless the Lord I have not deserted the righteous cause for which I suffer." He then spent a few minutes in prayer, and laying his head upon the block, stretched out his arms as a signal to the executioner, who severed his head from his body at one blow. "It was generally thought," remarks Burnet, "the government had lost more than it had gained by his death." Pepys declares that the courage Sir Henry Vane showed at his death "was talked of everywhere as a miracle;" and that he was told that "the king hath lost more by that man's death than he will get again a good while."*

General Lambert was tried at the same time with Vane; but his courage seems to have been subdued by his imprisonment, for he pleaded guilty, and threw himself upon the royal mercy. His sentence of death was commuted into perpetual imprisonment, and he passed the remainder of his days in the island of Guernsey. Edmund Ludlow, another of the regicides, fled to

* State Trials, vol. vi. pp. 119-198. Ludlow, vol. iii. p. 89. Pepys, vol. i. p. 275.

Switzerland, and took up his residence at Vevay, where, though often threatened with assassination by emissaries of the royal family, he survived till after the revolution of 1688, and witnessed the final overthrow and expulsion of the Stewart race. Lisle, who also obtained an asylum in Switzerland, was assassinated in August, 1664, on the Lord's day, as he was entering a church at Lausanne. Major-general Whalley and his son-in-law, Major-general Gough, who had stood together by Cromwell's death-bed, a few days before the arrival of Charles sailed for America, where, though a price was set upon their heads, they found a secure refuge. Whalley died in the year of the revolution; Gough survived till a later period, but the exact date of his death is unknown.

The popularity of the king was assailed on all hands by measures of which he did not approve, but which the current of events seemed to impel with uncontrollable force. The Bill of Indemnity was offensive to some of the cavaliers, as protecting the guilty and entailing neglect upon the meritorious. The Act of Uniformity alienated the regards of a large body to whom he was greatly indebted for his restoration; and his flagrant breach of promise, in the declaration of indulgence, lessened the respect of others who were bound to the throne by hereditary attachment, and even by the ties of a loyal prejudice. But as the animosity excited by these public proceedings was directed by one party against another with more intensity than it was pointed by any one of them against the sovereign, the credit of the government was not thereby generally affected. If one suffered, another derived an advantage; and hence complaints on the one side were met by approbation and triumph on the other. But the sale of Dunkirk to the French was so odious to the nation at large, that it was loudly condemned with hardly any exception. The lavish habits of the king, joined to a total want of regularity in his disbursements, kept him in a state of constant poverty; and as the Parliament took

care to keep him in a condition of dependence, their grants were merely sufficient to relieve him from embarrassment, but not to meet the increasing wants of his household. According to the notions of the time, Dunkirk was esteemed, in some sense, as the private property of the monarch, which he was under an obligation to maintain; and as the annual expense now amounted to about one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, he considered that the convenience of holding a town on the opposite coast could not, in any point of view, be equivalent to the immense outlay with which it was chargeable. It is not improbable that the two Houses would have concurred in relieving his Majesty from so great a burden, though they would not consent to grant him an adequate supply for the support of the garrison, if it were to be remitted through his hands; but Charles, satisfied with the approbation of the chancellor, who attached little value to a foreign port, transferred it to Louis at the price of four hundred thousand pounds.

But the depravity of the court, much more than the loss of Dunkirk, weakened in the public mind the love and reverence which were felt at the Restoration for the exiled prince. During the Commonwealth, when a religious profession was very generally maintained, both by those who felt and by those who did not feel the sacred obligations which bind man to his duty, vice was compelled to pay its usual homage to virtue, by concealing its own features, and sometimes by borrowing the resemblance of a character to which it had no claim. This double hypocrisy was at length attended with the wonted results: the real nature of both classes of dissemblers burst forth with an aggravated expression, and ungodliness advanced under the broad gaze of the world without disguise and without shame. In such circumstances, the personal exertions of a good king might have accomplished much in favour of morality and of true religion. But Charles, whose religious principles were of the loosest character and his

morals even worse, was disposed to deride the very appearance of sanctity. The austerities which he had witnessed among the Covenanters in the north, had given rise to a degree of suspicion and aversion, with reference to all persons of a religious profession, which unfortunately led him to extend his countenance to those who boldly divested themselves of the exterior garb of belief and decency. To this unhappy bias were added the loose habits acquired abroad, during his wandering life, and encouraged by the society of dissolute companions. The example of the French court, too, while it accustomed the eye of Europe to criminal excesses, might be held by the easy monarch as an apology for similar manners. But the English people, whose notions of social propriety were more strict, could not be induced to tolerate, even in the highest ranks, an open departure from the rules of virtue; and accordingly all writers who have marked the progress of events in this reign, trace the final expulsion of the Stewart family, to the licentious course of living which disgraced the palace of Charles II.*

The immorality of Charles could have been no secret, even before his restoration to the throne of his ancestors; but in a short time he laid aside all regard even for common decency. The licentiousness and extravagance, the low revelries and shameless debauchery of his court, shocked even those who most strongly disliked the precision of the Puritans. His avowed mistress, at the time of his marriage, was the notorious Barbara Villiers, whose husband, Roger Palmer, for his base connivance at her vice and infamy and his own dishonour, had been taken into the diplomatic service, and raised to the Irish peerage as the earl of Castlemaine. It was expected by some that

* "We are much indebted," says Mr. Hallam, "to the memory of Barbara, duchess of Cleveland, Louisa, duchess of Portsmouth, and Mrs. Eleanor Gwyn. We owe a tribute of gratitude to the Mays, the Killigrews, the Chiffinses, and the Grammonts. They played a serviceable part in ridding the country of its besotted loyalty. They saved our fathers from the Star Chamber and the High Commission Court, they laboured in their vocation against standing armies and corruption; they pressed forward the great ultimate security of English freedom—the expulsion of the house of Stewart."

if Charles did not on his marriage separate from his mistress, he would at least conduct his intercourse with her in a more private manner. But his intense selfishness indisposed him to make any, even the least, sacrifice either to duty or decency. He dined and supped, Pepys says, with Lady Castlemaine every day and night of the week that preceded the queen's arrival; he was there on the night that bonfires were lit in the street for that event; and when the young queen was established at Hampton Court, he insisted that his mistress should be one of her bed-chamber ladies. Clarendon, who had a strong sense of religious and moral obligation, and a great regard for the proprieties of life, says he boldly remonstrated with the king on the subject of this scandalous appointment; telling him "of the hard-heartedness and cruelty in laying such a command upon the queen, which flesh and blood could not comply with. The king," he says, "heard him with patience enough, yet with those little interruptions which were natural to him, especially to that part where he had levelled the mistresses of kings and princes with other lewd women; at which he expressed some indignation, being an argument often debated before him by those who would have them looked upon above any other men's wives." But the interview ended, according to Clarendon's own account, by the king's "requiring him to use all those arguments to the queen which were necessary to induce her to a full compliance with what the king desired." The chancellor, to his great disgrace, undertook this scandalous office, and waited several times on Catherine, to prove to her the duty of submission "to whatsoever his Majesty should desire of her." The young queen, however, friendless and forlorn as she was, replied with spirit and proper feeling to the arguments of this "hoary-headed mediator for royal profligacy," and threatened that, rather than submit to the affront her husband wished to put upon her, she would return to Portugal. The chancellor on this hastened to inform his employer of all that

had passed, and requested that he would forbear for a day or two pressing his design to place his mistress constantly in the service of his queen. But Charles would listen to no advice, and determined to make his wife submit at once to his wishes. "The fire flamed that night higher than ever," says Clarendon; the king reproached the queen with stubbornness and want of duty, and she him with tyranny and want of affection. he used threats and menaces which he never intended to put in execution, and she talked loudly how ill she was treated, and that she would return again to Portugal. He replied, that she should do well first to know whether her mother would receive her; and he would give her a fit opportunity to know that, by sending to their home all her Portuguese servants; and that he would forthwith give order for the discharge of them all.

What the threats and menaces were which Charles never intended to put in execution it is impossible to say; but he forthwith executed his cruel threat of depriving his wife of her servants—her countrymen and countrywomen, the friends of her childhood. After an interview with the chancellor, who had again waited upon the queen for the purpose of trying to overcome her natural repugnance, "he persevered in all his resolutions without any remorse, directed a day for all the Portugueses to be embarked, without assigning any considerable thing of bounty to any of them, or vouchsafing to write any letter to the king or queen of Portugal of the cause of the dismissal of them. And this rigour prevailed upon the great heart of the queen, who had not received any money to enable her to be liberal to any of those who had attended her out of their own country, and promised themselves places of great advantage in her family; and she earnestly desired the king that she might retain some few of those who were known to her, and of most use, that she might not be wholly left in the hands of strangers; and employed others to make the same suit to the king on her behalf. Whereupon the countess of Pen-

alva, who had been bred with her from a child, and who, by the infirmity of her eyes and other indisposition of health, scarce stirred out of her chamber, was permitted to remain in the court; and some few inferior servants in her kitchen and in the lowest offices, besides those who were necessary to her devotions, were left there. All the rest were transported to Portugal." Nor did Catherine's trials end here. "In all this time," continues Clarendon, "the king pursued his point: the lady came to the court, was lodged there, was every day in the queen's presence, and the king in continual conference with her, whilst the queen sat untaken notice of; and if her Majesty rose at the indignity and retired into her chamber, it may be one or two attended her; but all the company remained in the room she left, and too often said those things aloud which nobody ought to have whispered. She alone was left out in jollities, and not suffered to have any part of those pleasant applications and caresses which she saw made almost to everybody else; an universal mirth in all company but in hers, and in all places but in her chambers, her own servants showing more respect and more diligence to the person of the lady than towards their own mistress, who, they found, could do them less good. The nightly meetings continued with the same or more licence; and the discourses which passed there, of what argument soever, were the discourse of the whole court and of the town the day following; whilst the queen had the king's company those few hours which remained of the preceding night, and which were too little for sleep. All these mortifications were too heavy to be borne; so that at last, when it was least expected or suspected, the queen on a sudden let herself fall first to conversation and then to familiarity, and, even in the same instant, to a confidence with the lady; was merry with her in public; talked kindly of her; and in private used nobody more friendly."*

* Clarendon's Life.

CHAPTER IX.—A.D. 1663–1667.

CHARLES II.

DISTURBANCES IN THE NORTH—REPEAL OF THE TRIENNIAL ACT—CONVENTICLE ACT PASSED—WAR WITH HOLLAND—PROCEEDINGS OF SIR ROBERT HOLMES—EXPLOITS OF DE RUITER—POLICY OF LOUIS XIV.—NAVAL FIGHT WITH THE DUTCH—MEETING OF PARLIAMENT AT OXFORD—LIBERAL SUPPLIES GRANTED, BUT LIMITED TO THE EXPENSES OF THE WAR—CLERGY TAXED FOR THE MONTHLY ASSESSMENT—PLAGUE IN LONDON—INTRIGUES OF THE LIBERAL PARTY WITH THE DUTCH—THE FIVE MILE ACT—LOUIS JOINS THE DUTCH—FOUR DAYS' FIGHT AT SEA—DEFEAT OF THE ENGLISH—ANOTHER NAVAL BATTLE, AND VICTORY OF THE ENGLISH FLEET—FIRE OF LONDON—LAWS ENFORCED AGAINST THE ROMAN CATHOLICS—UNPOPULARITY OF THE KING—ARBITRARY MEASURES IN SCOTLAND—SHAMEFUL TREATMENT OF LORD LORNE—DISGRACEFUL INTRIGUES OF THE COMMISSIONER—ACT OF THE COUNCIL AGAINST THE CLERGY—FOUR HUNDRED RESIGN THEIR CHARGES—CHARACTER OF THEIR SUCCESSORS—THEIR RECEPTION BY THE PEOPLE—DOWNFALL OF MIDDLETON—SERVILITY OF THE PARLIAMENT—SEVERE LAWS AGAINST THE PRESBYTERIANS—CRUEL TREATMENT AND EXECUTION OF JOHNSTONE OF WARRISTON—CONVENTICLES AND FIELD MEETINGS—EXACTIONS OF THE SOLDIERS—THE HIGH COURT OF COMMISSION—ITS ARBITRARY AND ILLEGAL PROCEEDINGS—CRUELITIES OF SIR JAMES TURNER—INSURRECTION IN GALLOWAY—BATTLE OF RULLION GREEN—BARBAROUS TREATMENT OF THE PRISONERS—TORTURE OF THE BOOT—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF NEILSON OF CORSACK AND OF HUGH M'KAIL—ATROCIOUS PROCEEDINGS OF GENERAL DALZELL—CONDUCT OF THE CURATES—CONDEMNATION OF THE ACCUSED IN THEIR ABSENCE—SHIPS IN THE THAMES AND MEDWAY BURNED BY THE DUTCH—DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT OF THE GOVERNMENT—UNPOPULARITY OF LORD CLARENDON—HIS DOWNFALL AND EXILE

THE summer of 1663 witnessed some disturbances which, though not originating in political disaffection, afforded an intelligible proof that the materials of the constitution were not yet firmly consolidated. A partial rising took place in the northern counties, excited, it was supposed, by a class of enthusiasts who cherished the hopes peculiar to the Fifth Monarchy. Some of them, indeed, mixed with their religious visions certain speculations of a more secular nature; complaining, in particular, that the Parliament, by having continued more than three years, had violated the restrictions of the Triennial Act, passed in the reign of Charles I. The duke of Buckingham, acting as the royal lieutenant, soon suppressed them, and after the infliction of condign punishment on a few individuals, tranquillity was re-established. This incident, though of little importance, considered in its immediate results, afforded a pretext for some legislative measures extending to interests which were not at the moment contemplated. When the Houses assembled in the spring of 1664, the king recommended that the Act just mentioned should be repealed; declaring his resolution not to be guided in his official proceedings by the methods prescribed in it. He loved Parliaments, he said—he was much beholden to Parliaments; he did not think the crown could ever be happy without frequent Parliaments. “But assure yourselves,” he said in conclusion, “if I should think otherwise, I would never suffer a Parliament to come together by the means presented in that bill.” Nothing can show more clearly the baseness and servility of

the Parliament than the fact, that such language was not only patiently borne with, but that the statute was abolished without a murmur. It was thought enough to substitute in its place a general clause that "Parliaments should not be interrupted above three years at the most," an arrangement of which both parties had reason to repent before the end of his Majesty's reign.

In the same session was passed the infamous bill called the Conventicle Act, which prohibited as seditious and unlawful all meetings of more than five individuals, besides the family, for any religious purpose not according to the book of Common Prayer. A single justice of the peace might convict without a jury, and might for the third offence pass sentence of transportation beyond seas for seven years. But with refined cruelty, it was provided that the offender should not be transported to New England, where he was likely to find sympathizing friends. If he returned to his own country before the expiration of his term of exile, he was liable to capital punishment. Regard for the church and monarchy was the pretence by which the abettors of this intolerant law sought to justify it in the eyes of the world. It was heartily applauded by Clarendon, who affirms that, if it had been vigorously executed, it would no doubt have brought about a thorough-conformity. It is difficult to form a notion of what the chancellor would have regarded as vigorous enforcement of the law, if he really thought that the mode in which it was carried out deserved to be called weak or mild. The militia and the soldiers to whom, along with the civil authorities, the execution of the Act was committed, broke open every house where they supposed that a few nonconformists were assembled to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, and the wretched unwholesome prisons were soon crowded with victims of both sexes and of all ages. An evil, inseparable from all such laws, was found to attach in a special

manner to this obnoxious and oppressive Act; it bore with the greatest weight on the most conscientious, who resolved to obey the laws of God rather than of man. Various reasons have been assigned for such studied severity on the part of the people's own representatives, in opposition to the desire of the king and of a large party within the precincts of his court. There was, it is manifest, the hereditary dread of popery, which the events consequent on the Reformation had impressed deeply on the national mind; and to this was now added the suspicion that many nonconformists, disappointed in their expectations, were disposed to co-operate with the Dutch in their designs upon England. But it has been justly observed that the Parliament had only in their eye the supposed disloyalty of the sectaries; they should have carried their attention farther, to the chief cause of that feeling, the unjust and oppressive restraints under which they laboured.*

The first war in which Charles was engaged had for its object the protection and increase of commerce. The Hollanders, who at an early period had extended their trade to all quarters of the globe, resented what they considered the encroachments of the English on their province, both in the east and the west. Various collisions had taken place in foreign parts between the mercantile shipping of either nation; several factories had been destroyed, and some islands had been captured. The complaints of the merchants were eagerly received by Parliament the Commons voted an address, in which they petitioned his Majesty to take effectual steps for the speedy redress of these injuries; the Peers approached the throne with similar sentiments; and Charles, who, perhaps, did not enter fully into their views, contented himself with an assurance that he would demand satisfaction.

* Collier, vol. ii. p. 898, remarks that the behaviour of the nonconformists grew more unacceptable to the government. It cannot be denied there was some umbrage given for jealousy and caution. Some fanatics took service under the Dutch against their own prince and country. This observation applies to the Five Mile Act, but the same feelings were in activity the year before.

through his ambassador, and, in case of denial, would follow out their recommendation. But before the effect of negotiation or remonstrance could be tried, hostilities began. At the request of the African Company, a small squadron was despatched under Sir Robert Holmes, who, after driving the Dutch from several stations on that coast, crossed the Atlantic, and possessed himself of the settlement of New Amsterdam, originally belonging to the English, and which, in honour of the king's brother, he now called New York. As war was not yet declared on either side, the cabinet of London thought it not proper to recognize the hostile proceedings of Holmes, who, in order to silence the complaints of the Hollanders, was (upon his return from his expedition) cast into prison. The States-general, meantime, who felt that their flag had been subjected to an insult, resolved to retaliate in a similar manner. Having a fleet in the Mediterranean employed, in conjunction with some British ships under Sir John Lawson, in repressing the ravages of the Barbary pirates, they sent private instructions to their admiral, De Ruyter, to separate himself from his ally at the Straits of Gibraltar, and then, with a strong hand, to wipe away the reproach inflicted upon their country by the attack of Holmes. In pursuance of this petty warfare, a number of merchantmen was taken by both parties; and soon thereafter the king, having received an ample vote of money from the Commons, issued a formal declaration of hostilities.*

It is still a matter of doubt whether Louis XIV. interested himself in fomenting this war, or whether he did not actually try to prevent it. His policy, from the very moment he assumed the reins of government, is understood to have been to allow the two maritime powers to exhaust themselves in struggles with each other; and this view of his conduct is not incompatible with his offers of mediation at the important

crisis when he was about to engage in hostilities with Spain and the empire. His object might be to postpone a rupture, though he had no wish to preserve peace between the English and the Dutch. The States insisted upon their right to his aid in virtue of their treaty of defensive alliance; while Charles attempted to neutralize their application by promising his consent to the conquest of the Spanish Netherlands by the arms of France. Louis turned a deaf ear to the proposal, because it was not then his interest that the Hollanders should be crushed, and the English be raised to the undisputed sovereignty of the ocean.*

Early in the spring of the year 1665, a powerful fleet was ready to put to sea, under the command of the duke of York, Prince Rupert, and Lord Sandwich. The Dutch left their port in the month of May, under the direction of Opdam, a distinguished officer, who was appointed to occupy the place of De Ruyter, not yet returned from his cruise to the coast of America. The hostile squadrons descried each other not far from the Norfolk shore, on the morning of the 3rd of June; and after some display of seamanship on the part of the two admirals, a regular fight commenced. A heavy fire was exchanged during four hours with doubtful success, when Opdam's ship blew up, and the remainder of the fleet, stunned by this accident, sheered off in the utmost confusion for the Texel, having lost eighteen vessels and seven thousand men, including four admirals†. The duke was rewarded for this victory with a grant of a hundred and twenty thousand pounds; but great dissatisfaction was felt on account of the neglect of the English fleet to follow up their victory. The reason alleged is, that the duke of York's officers were unwilling to expose him to further danger. All the duke's domestics said he had got honour enough: why should he venture a second

* Clarendon, 196. Pepys, vol. ii. p. 178. *Mémoires de Grammont*. Burnet, *Own Times*, vol. i. p. 187. *Journal of Lords*, vol. xi. p. 599.

* D'Estrades, sub. ann. 1664.

† Clarendon, *Continuation*, vol. ii. p. 289. *Life of James II* vol. i. p. 415.

time? The officers, therefore, took it upon them to shorten sail after he had retired to rest, and thus all hope of overtaking the flying enemy was lost

The expenditure incident to war rendered it necessary for Charles to call together his Parliament; and as the metropolis was at that time labouring under the visitation of pestilence, the session was held at Oxford. In his speech he adverted to the popular character of the contest in which the country was engaged; the urgency with which they had pressed him to draw the sword; the necessity of prosecuting hostilities with vigour; and, finally, to certain domestic enemies who were understood to be in league with the Dutch. The Commons granted an additional supply of one million two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, to be raised by monthly assessments after the manner introduced during the rule of the Long Parliament, and found so efficacious as a financial expedient. The vote of the lower House on this occasion has been considered more than usually important, on account of certain conditions attached to it; namely, that the money should be applied for a specific purpose, and that the details of the disbursement should be submitted to the inspection of the members. Though such a restriction was not by any means new, the king's ministers were disposed to resent it as an encroachment on the prerogative, but his Majesty, who was unwilling to quarrel with the Opposition when in so liberal a humour, made no objection to the clause in the bill which confined the grant to the expenses of the war. That supplies voted by Parliament are only to be expended for particular objects specified by the representatives of the people, became from this time an undisputed principle, recognized by a practice more or less regular. It brought with it the necessity of laying estimates before the House of Commons; and by exposing the management of the national revenues to the eye of the public, has given to the popular branch of the constitution not only an effective control

over the executive government, but, in some measure, rendered them partakers in it. It is worthy of remark, that this new mode of taxation introduced a novelty into the church. Down to the period of the civil war the clergy had reserved the power of granting supplies to the state when assembled in convocation; usually voting the same number of subsidies as were given by the two houses of Parliament. But as this method could not be applied to the raising of money by county rates, it was agreed that the clerical privilege should be suspended for the present, with a reservation of the right, should the ancient practice ever be revived.*

An allusion has been made to the plague in London as the cause why the Parliament met at Oxford. The ravages of that frightful disease were attended with a great loss of life, and also with the most oppressive terror, which, while it propagated the calamity, rendered the efforts of the inhabitants less efficient when using the means of cure or prevention. Upwards of a hundred thousand are said to have perished in the capital alone; and in the following season, the distemper raged with nearly equal violence in the surrounding counties. This havoc, the greatest that any plague had ever made in England, "did dishearten all people," says Burnet, "and coming in the very time when so unjust a war was begun, it had a dreadful appearance. All the king's enemies and the enemies of monarchy said, here was a manifest character of God's heavy displeasure upon the nation; as indeed the ill life the king led, and the viciousness of the whole court, gave but a melancholy prospect." In such circumstances the triumph gained by the duke of York over the Dutch made little impression on the public, whose thoughts were mainly directed to their own preservation. The wealthier classes fled from the crowded streets where infection was spreading on

* Journal of Commons, Nov., 1665. Stat. 17 Charles II. c. i. Life of Clarendon, p. 815. Hallam, Constitutional History, ii. p. 482.

every hand, abandoning their numerous dependents to a misery which they could hardly mitigate, and which the most unbounded liberality could not have removed. But it is nevertheless true that the cessation of trade and the want of employment were found to augment the distress to which the industrious orders were otherwise exposed; it being calculated that forty thousand servants were left without a home, and that as many labourers found themselves deprived of their wonted means of subsistence *

The war with Holland afforded an opportunity to the discontented to renew their schemes for disturbing the government. Both in respect to religion and civil polity, the Hollanders presented a model much more agreeable to a large body of the nonconformists than the rule by a king and bishops. It is certain that De Witt and Louis, in their communications through D'Estrades, took into their consideration, amongst other modes of distracting the measures and weakening the force of Charles, that of fomenting disturbances in England. It is even alleged, that Algernon Sidney went to Paris, and offered to procure a republican rising in Britain, if the French monarch would supply him with a hundred thousand crowns: Louis offered only twenty thousand, and as the sum was thought insufficient, the matter ended. Clarendon, to whom these intrigues appear not to have been unknown, adverted in his speech at the opening of Parliament, to domestic foes in league with the Dutch; adding, that the way to humble enemies abroad, was to provide for the suppression of those at home. Even during the plague, the plans of the disaffected were supposed to be in progress; and Lord Albemarle, who remained in London, surrounded by the dead and the dying, received notice that an attempt on the Tower was meditated by a band of conspirators instigated by Colonel Danvers. Several desperate enthusiasts, who were

maddened by the daily horrors which they witnessed, were apprehended and condemned to death by the courts of law; while to reach the disaffected who continued abroad, the Parliament passed an Act of attainder against all subjects of the king who, after a certain day, should continue in the service of the States-general.

The high church party, who were still all-powerful in the House of Commons, were not satisfied with the restrictions which they had imposed on the nonconformists. On the 30th of October a bill received the sanction of the Commons, prohibiting their ministers from coming, unless passing on the road, within five miles of any city, borough, or corporate town, in which they had preached or taught since the passing of the Act of Uniformity. The penalty, in case of disobedience, was a fine of forty pounds for every offence, and six months' imprisonment if they refused to take the oath of non-resistance. Even this triumph did not content the dominant party, for they next brought into the House of Commons a bill for imposing the oath of non-resistance upon the whole nation; and but for an accidental occurrence this bill would have become law. "The providence by which it was thrown out," says Locke, "was very remarkable for Mr Peregrine Bertie being newly chosen, was introduced into the House by his brother the now earl of Lindsey, and Sir Thomas Osborne, now lord-treasurer, who all three gave their votes against that bill; and the numbers were so even upon the division that these three votes carried the question against it." "Three votes," says Ralph, "had the merit of saving their country from the greatest ignominy that could have befallen it—that of riveting, as well as forging, its own chains."

Louis, who was bound by the defensive alliance to protect the Hollanders, found himself now called upon by these republicans to interpose with his arms or his counsel in their behalf. But it suited not the cautious policy of the great monarch

* Deffoe, *History of the Plague*. Limelogia, by Hodges. Evelyn, *Diary*, vol. ii. p. 246. Ellis, *Letters*, vol. iv. p. 88. Pepys, vol. ii. p. 266.

to plunge into a war with England, whose maritime power was so much superior to his own. He professed an earnest desire for peace, endeavoured to occupy the attention of the two commercial nations, and listened, at the same time, to the terms proposed by each as the price of his neutrality on the one hand, and of his active aid on the other. At length the bishop of Munster, a restless and inconsistent prelate, threatened to invade the States. The French king sent six thousand troops to oppose him, and thereby, in fact, took an open part against Charles, who, a few months before, had fallen into a misunderstanding with the court of Denmark, on account of some Dutch ships which had taken refuge in the harbour of Berghen in Norway. The Danish monarch was willing to allow the English admiral, Lord Sandwich, to capture these vessels in his port, on condition that he should receive half of the spoil. Sandwich, however, wished to seize the whole, and ordered a part of his fleet to dash into the harbour and cut out the Dutch vessels. But they were received with a tremendous fire, both from the ships and from the Danish castle and land batteries, and were obliged to retreat with disgrace and loss. Thus, in the course of a very brief period, the balance of power turned decidedly in favour of the allies, who could now send to sea a formidable fleet, and threaten all the shores of Britain.*

On the 1st of June, 1666, the squadrons of France and Holland left their respective ports, prepared to meet their antagonists, and compete once more for the glory of naval pre-eminence. The duke of Beaufort commanded the former; the latter was under the direction of De Ruyter and Van Tromp; but a sanguinary engagement took place before the duke could join his allies or take any share in the contest, though it continued during the unwonted space of four days. Albemarle, who had served on sea

under the government of Cromwell, added experience as a sailor to the coolness and intrepidity which he had often displayed on land; and Prince Rupert, whose courage was unquestionable, was joined with him as second in authority. Monk, whose easy victories on former occasions led him to undervalue the strength of the enemy, detached the prince with twenty ships to watch the motions of the French admiral, who was supposed to have entered the Channel. The absence of so large a portion of the fleet gave a great superiority to the Dutch, who, on the first and second days of the fight, gained some important advantages. Each night the fleets spent in repairing the injuries they had received on the preceding day, and each morning they renewed the combat with unabated vigour. On the third day, Rupert, who had failed to discover the enemy at Ushant, returned with all speed to rejoin his colleague, believing a battle to be imminent, and came up just in time to save Monk from destruction. It was resolved to renew the engagement on the fourth day; but the Dutch, satisfied with the advantages they had gained, began to fall back towards their own harbours. The British pursued and again attacked them; but the Dutch, who had still the superiority in numbers, turned on their pursuers, and inflicted far more damage than they received. At last, on the evening of the fourth day, a thick fog interrupted the fight, and the British admirals drew off and acknowledged a defeat. Upwards of twenty of their ships had been taken and destroyed, and many more were disabled. Two of their admirals, Sir W. Berkeley and Sir Christopher Minns, were killed, and another, Sir G. Ayscough, was taken prisoner. The Dutch also lost some ships and several of their best officers. De Witt had the magnanimity to say of the British seamen, "that their defeat did them more honour than all their former victories. The Dutch fleet could never have been brought on again after such a fight as that on the first day, and he believed none but the

* Basnage, *Annales des Provinces Unies*, i. p. 787. *Œuvres de Louis XIV.* ii. 6. Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV.*

English could. And all that the Dutch had discovered was, that Englishmen might be killed and English ships might be burnt, but that English valour was invincible." "The court," says Burnet, "gave out that it was a victory, and public thanksgivings were ordered, which was a horrid mockery of God and a lying to the world; though we had in one respect reason to thank God that we had not lost our whole fleet."

To secure the junction of the French ships under Beaufort, with the fleet again committed to his own trust, De Ruyter put to sea, and took his station near the mouth of the Thames. As this movement seemed to indicate a spirit of defiance, Albemarle and Rupert, who had refitted their squadron, sailed forth to drive the vaunting enemy from their shores. On this occasion the strength of the combatants was nearly equal, amounting to about eighty sail on each side, and as the leaders were animated with all the feelings which prompt to daring exploits and contempt of life, the contest could not fail to be at once obstinate and bloody. Almost at the very commencement fortune smiled upon the steady gallantry of the English. The Dutch van was completely routed; and the main body under De Ruyter, not being supported by Tromp, could not withstand the weight of the numbers by which it was assailed. Throughout the day, the dogged energy of Monk, seconded by the valour of his men, secured the advantages acquired at the outset; and when the cloud of night descended, he had only to make arrangements for pursuing the vanquished foe, who now bent their utmost endeavours to find their way back to their own harbours, having lost twenty sail and not less than seven thousand men*.

On this occasion, as well as after the triumph achieved by the duke of York, the joy of the nation was checked by a great public calamity. The summer had been unusually hot and dry, and had rendered the timber dwellings, of which a large portion of the capital consisted, as com-

bustible as fire-wood. In the middle of the night, between the 2nd and 3rd of September, a fire broke out accidentally in a baker's shop near London Bridge, on the spot where the Monument now stands, "that raged for three days as if it had a commission to devour every thing that was in its way." Want of decisive measures, and that terror which seizes weak minds when encompassed with an unexpected danger, aggravated an evil which might have been confined to narrow limits. The whole town seemed enveloped in a sheet of flame, which, aided by a strong wind and combustible materials, spread with astonishing rapidity. Houses, churches, and other public buildings, were instantly reduced to ashes. Two-thirds of the metropolis were laid in ruins, including the whole space between the Tower and the Temple, and comprehending upwards of thirteen thousand houses, with about ninety churches. The wretched inhabitants, who had fled to the suburbs, were seen, to the amount of two hundred thousand, making their beds in the fields, or collecting the remains of the food and clothing which the conflagration had spared. Charles, who was deeply affected at the sight of so much misery, exerted himself to the utmost extent of his bodily powers and mental energies. Wherever the danger appeared the greatest, there was he found, in company with his brother, animating the workmen employed in pulling down the blazing piles, and rewarding the labours of the most active with gifts and promises. Dividing the city into districts, he placed over each a member of his privy council; while, to relieve the wants of the destitute, he ordered provisions and other necessaries from his own palace, as well as from the public stores. We make no inquiry into the cause of this great misfortune, both because no means remain for tracing it to its origin, and also because, even at this distant day, the investigation could scarcely be carried on without rousing feelings, political and religious, which darken the eyes of history,

* *Mémoires D'Extrades*, iii. p. 846. *Pepys*, ii. p. 444.

and sometimes lead even the most candid to rest satisfied with conjecture instead of fact. That it was meditated there seems no reason to believe; and that with proper means it might have been sooner ended, has never been questioned by any one competent to form an opinion.*

Though the attempt failed to trace this disaster to the Roman Catholics, suspicion was so extensively entertained by the great body of the people that his Majesty found it necessary to issue a proclamation, commanding all priests and Jesuits to quit the kingdom. Directions were given, at the same time, to execute the laws against recusants, to disarm all papists, to administer the usual oaths to all suspected persons, and to dismiss from the army every officer and soldier who should refuse such tests, or had not received the sacrament in the prescribed form. But the grievance appears to have sunk to a greater depth than these expedients could reach, and to have had a secret reference to Charles' own sentiments and predilections on the ground of religion. At all events, his popularity began to wane, and from this date he found his administration opposed by a party in the state which gradually increased in power during the remainder of his reign. The Commons, who never ceased to grudge their liberal supplies, were dissatisfied with the manner of their disbursement, or with the defective returns in which the expenditure was detailed; and certain individuals connected with the court, availing themselves of this rising displeasure, sought to avenge some imaginary wrongs by adopting the complaints of the lower House. At the head

* Two remarkable coincidences have been noticed by authors. At the trials of certain conspirators in the preceding April, it appeared that they had intended to set fire to London on the 8th of September of the last year, that they might avail themselves of the confusion to overturn the government, and it was about one in the morning of the 8th of September this year (1666) that the fire made its appearance. (*London Gazette*, April 28-26.) Again, in 1656, a treatise was advertised purporting to show from the Apocalypse, that in the year 1666 the Romish Babylon would be destroyed by fire. Now this great fire happened in 1666, though the effect did not tally with that predicted. Lingard, vol. xii. p. 154. It may also be remarked, that the 8th of September, being Cromwell's auspicious day, was not unlikely to be selected by such prophets as Lilly.

of these was the profligate duke of Buckingham, a man of no fixed principles, but whose talents were such that, as has been said of him, he wanted nothing save steadiness to render him formidable. This faction, though it comprehended several individuals of patriotic views, was mainly composed of a selfish crew, who were not a whit more honest or virtuous than the court. Their proposal, however, was proper and judicious, that a bill should be introduced for appointing commissioners to examine the accounts of those who had received and issued the money for the Dutch war. In spite of all the efforts of the ministers and of the profligate royal favourites of both sexes, the bill passed both houses of Parliament. But the victorious party knew not how to use the advantage they had gained, and in the end it was turned into a mockery, by the king being allowed to appoint a commission of his own for "taking accounts of the several sums of money which had been raised and assigned to his Majesty's use during the war, and of all such moneys and profits as had been made of prizes taken since the beginning of the war, with power to call to account all receivers and treasurers, and all such authority as might serve for the effectual and impartial execution of the said commission."*

Meanwhile, affairs had gone from bad to worse in Scotland. An Act of indemnity had indeed been passed, but not, as in England, granting an unconditional amnesty. Heavy fines were imposed on all who were accused of any compliance with the Commonwealth, or of any act of resistance to the arbitrary proceedings of Charles I. Not a few were heavily amerced without any evidence, or even inquiry, respecting their guilt. A list of nine hundred persons was presented to Parliament, whose united fines amounted to eighty-five thousand pounds; some of whom were dead, some had been abroad during the civil wars, and some were mere infants. It was to no purpose that

* Clarendon, Continuation, vol. iii. p. 269. Journal of Lords, vol. xii. pp. 84-88. Journal of Commons, sub ann.

exceptions were taken to the list: the only reply was, that those who did not pay the sum demanded would be excluded from the Act of indemnity.

Middleton cherished a deep grudge against the Argyle family, and was deeply chagrined that their estates had been wrested from his grasp, and restored to the son of the great marquis whom he had helped to bring to the block. Argyle, however, had a bond for four hundred thousand marks on the estates of the marquis of Huntly, which he was compelled to surrender. Lorne, irritated at this act of injustice, had complained, in a confidential letter to a friend, of the calumnies which had been employed to prepossess the king against him, adding he had now discovered and hoped to defeat his enemies. This letter was intercepted by Middleton, and made the ground of a charge against Lorne, of what was termed "leasing-making," or sowing dissension between the king and his subjects. He was actually found guilty on the sole evidence of this letter, and condemned to death. But his life was saved by the king, who having a personal regard for the unfortunate earl, had anticipated such a result of the trial, and had given stringent orders that no sentence should be executed without his express instructions. Furious at the escape of his prey, Middleton immediately procured the passing of an Act prohibiting all intercession in behalf of the children of those who had been attainted by Parliament.*

In the western districts of the country the presbyterian clergy continued to occupy their pulpits, though they declined to attend the diocesan meetings, and to acknowledge the canonical authority of the bishops. Middleton, therefore, determined by the advice of Clarendon to enforce the new laws for the support of Episcopacy. For this purpose he undertook a tour through the western counties, accompanied by certain members of the privy council, who excited the disgust of the people by the scenes of debauchery and profanity which took place

during their progress. At Glasgow they framed an Act of Council, ejecting at once from their livings all those ministers who had not complied with the Act of Parliament enjoining them to obtain a presentation from the patron, and induction from the bishop of the diocese. "Duke Hamilton told me," says Burnet, "they were all so drunk that day that they were not capable of considering any thing that was laid before them, and would hear of nothing but executing the law without any relenting or delay."

Archbishop Fairfoul, at whose instigation this rash and unpolitic step was taken, affirmed that there would not be two ministers in all his diocese who would refuse to obey this Act; and Middleton and his associates treated with scorn that any except a few zealots would sacrifice their livings for the sake of their principles. But to the surprise and mortification both of the bishops and the members of the privy council, nearly four hundred ministers at once resigned their charges, rather than do violence to their consciences. The expulsion of so large a body from their homes, in the depth of winter, excited deep indignation and grief in the minds of the people. "The honest people," says Kirkton, "encouraged their ministers to enter upon the course of suffering, and many in Scotland rejoiced to see their ministers give that proof of their sincerity: for there were some who affirmed that not twenty ministers in Scotland would lose their stipends for refusing to sit with a bishop."

Sharp, who had much more foresight and craft than the blustering drunken commissioner, had intended to expel the recusant ministers in detail, and to fill their places gradually with submissive conformists; but this simultaneous resignation of the Presbyterians frustrated his scheme, and greatly embarrassed the council. In order to retrieve the consequences of their rashness and folly, they issued a proclamation on the 23rd of December, 1662, confirming the Glasgow Act, but extending the day of grace to the

* Acts of Parliament, vol. vii. p. 418.

1st of February, 1663. But the "outed ministers" firmly adhered to their resolution, and it therefore became necessary to supply the vacant churches with pastors, which proved a very difficult task. The whole country was searched for clergymen, and, as Hume admits, no one was so ignorant or vicious as to be rejected. The greater part of "the curates," as the new incumbents were called, were brought from the northern districts of the kingdom, where Episcopacy had always been dominant. "They were a set of young lads," Kirkton says, "unstudied and unbred, who had all the properties of Jeroboam's priests, miserable in the world, and unable to subsist, which made them so much long for a stipend. So they went to their churches with the same intention as a shepherd contracts for herding a flock of sheep." The expelled ministers, on the admission of their enemies, were "men remarkable for the severity of their manners and their fervour in preaching." But their successors were men of a very different stamp. "They were the worst preachers I ever heard," says Bishop Burnet, "they were ignorant to a reproach, and many of them were openly vicious. They were a disgrace to their orders and the sacred function, and were indeed the dregs and refuse of the northern parts. Those of them who arose above contempt or scandal, were men of such ardent tempers that they were as much hated as the others were despised."

The curates were everywhere regarded as intruders. "In some places," says Wodrow, "they were welcomed with tears in abundance, and entreaties to be gone; in others, with reasonings and arguments which confounded them; and some entertained them with threats, affronts, and indignities, too many here to be repeated. The tongue of the kirk bell in some places was stolen away, that the parishioners might have an excuse for not coming to church. The doors of the church in other cases were barricaded, and they were made to enter by the window literally. The baser of the gentry easily engaged them to join their drinking cabals,

which, with all iniquity, did now fearfully abound, and sadly exposed them; and in some places the people, fretted with the dismal change, gathered together and violently opposed their settlement, and received them with showers of stones." So strong was the feeling against the intruders, that, he adds, "profane fellows thought there was no surer way of atoning for the excesses of the last night, than by insulting a curate the next morning." These annoyances," Kirkton tells us, "were ordinarily the actions of the profane and ignorant, not approved by the sober and judicious Presbyterians."

The downfall of Middleton, whose administration had become at once odious and contemptible, brought no relief to the Covenanters. Lauderdale, who now succeeded to the chief management of Scottish affairs, was originally a zealous Presbyterian, and had taken a leading part in promoting the Solemn League and Covenant. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Worcester, and had suffered imprisonment for nine years in the Tower and other places of confinement. He was shrewd and energetic, and possessed of extensive learning, both theological and classical. But he was coarse and boisterous in his manners, furious and ungovernable in his passions, mean and cringing to his superiors, and haughty and overbearing to his inferiors. His personal appearance was extremely unprepossessing. "He was very big," says Burnet, "his hair red, hanging oddly about him. His tongue was too big for his mouth, which made him bedew all that he talked to, and his whole manner was rough and boisterous." Although he did not shrink from the unsparing use of the most cruel tortures to compel his countrymen to submit to Episcopacy, it is well known that he retained to the day of his death his preference for the Presbyterian system.

When the Parliament reassembled on the 18th of June, 1663, its proceedings were marked by the most abject spirit of servility. Severe enactments were passed against the

presbyterian ministers, who were to be punished as seditious if they ventured to preach after their ejection. They were also forbidden to reside within twenty miles of their parishes, or within six miles of Edinburgh, or of any cathedral church, or within three miles of any royal burgh. Absence from the parish church was to be punished with a heavy fine; and in the case of tenants and burgesses, with corporal punishment in addition. At this meeting of the Estates, Sir Archibald Johnstone of Warriston, one of the principal leaders of the Covenanters, was brought to trial. He had taken refuge on the Continent, but was tracked and hunted down by the emissaries of the English government. Though old, and so utterly broken down in body and mind, that Burnet says it was a reproach to the government to proceed against him, he was treated with great inhumanity by Sharp and some other members of the privy council. He was, of course, found guilty, and executed.

The ejected ministers contrived to preach in the fields, in spite of the threats of severe pains and penalties, and the great body of the people in the southern and western districts attended on their ministry. In this way originated the field-preachings so famous in Scottish history. The bishops, provoked at this general desertion of the parish churches, procured an Act "for separation and disobedience to ecclesiastical authority," popularly termed "the Bishops' drag-net," inflicting the penalties of sedition on the preachers, and heavy fines on those who absented themselves from the ministrations of the "curates." The levying of these fines was intrusted to the soldiers quartered in the disaffected districts. These "booted apostles," as they were called, behaved as if they had been in an enemy's country, and plundered and abused the people without mercy.

In 1664 was instituted the notorious High Court of Commission, consisting of nine prelates and thirty-four laymen, for the purpose of executing with greater stringency

and severity the laws against the nonconforming Presbyterians. They were empowered to call before them at their pleasure "all popish traffickers, intercommuners with, and reseters of Jesuits and seminary priests, all who said and heard mass." This section of the Act, however, was inserted merely as a blind, and was never enforced. The real object for which this tribunal was instituted, was to deal with "all obstinate contemners of the discipline of the church; all keepers of conventicles; all the ejected ministers who continued to remain in their parishes, or to exercise the functions of their office; all who preached in private houses, or elsewhere, without licence from the bishop of the diocese; all who kept meetings or fasts without licence; all who preached, spoke, or wrote against the existing government of the church or kingdom, all who neglected to attend divine worship in their respective parish churches,"* all, in a word, who ventured to show in any way their dissatisfaction with the overthrow of Presbyterianism, and with the recent enactments against the rights and liberties of the people.

The proceedings of this commission were of the most oppressive and intolerable character. Heavy fines, and even imprisonment, were inflicted on persons of rank who permitted or attended conventicles; ministers who preached without licence were imprisoned and banished; women were publicly whipped, children were scourged and branded, and then sold as slaves to the Plantations. The giving of aid to any of the ejected ministers was punished as sedition.

The people in the south and western districts, though reduced to great misery by these outrages and exactions, had hitherto borne them patiently; but now the oppression which maketh even wise men mad at length roused them to resistance. One of the most savage and merciless agents of the government, in harassing the Covenanters, was an English mercenary soldier, named Sir James Turner, who had at one time

* Burnet, vol. i. pp. 366, 367.

served in the covenanting army, but now lent himself an unscrupulous and willing tool to execute the orders of the council against his former associates. Bishop Burnet, who knew him well, says, "Sir James Turner was naturally fierce, but was mad when he was drunk, which was very often." His barbarities became at last so intolerable that the peasantry were goaded into an ill-advised and unpremeditated insurrection, which was followed by the most disastrous consequences. In November, 1666, a party of his soldiers were shamefully abusing a poor old man, in the village of Dalry in Galloway, who could not pay the fine demanded of him. A riot ensued, in which one of the soldiers was wounded, and their prisoner rescued. The insurrection soon spread, and a body of about fifty horse and two hundred foot, headed by some country gentlemen who had suffered severely from the exactions of the soldiers, marched to Dumfries and surprised Sir James Turner, and took him prisoner, but did him no injury. The insurgents then marched towards Lanark, their numbers augmenting as they proceeded, till they amounted to about three thousand horse and foot, but ill armed and undisciplined. From Lanark they marched amidst a storm of wind and rain towards Edinburgh, expecting to be joined by great numbers of the people, who, it was supposed, were friendly to their cause; but on reaching Colinton, about three or four miles from the capital, they learned that the gates were shut and the citizens in arms against them. They then turned aside to the Pentland Hills, with the intention of returning to the west by way of Biggar. But General Dalzell, who had been despatched against them, at the head of a strong body of troops, was following closely on their steps. He overtook them, on the 28th of November, at a place called Rullion Green, about six miles from Edinburgh. They were now reduced to about nine hundred men, and were weary with their long march, hungry, and wet. But though attacked by overwhelming numbers, they fought with desperate courage,

and repelled three assaults of the royal troops. They were at last totally routed; about fifty were killed, including two Irish ministers who had joined them, and one hundred and thirty were taken prisoners. About thirty more were captured in the pursuit. Twenty of the prisoners were executed at Edinburgh, and a number more at Ayr, and in various parts of the country, before their own doors. A considerable number were banished to the Plantations, and fifty, who had escaped, were outlawed, and their property confiscated.

It was the unanimous testimony of the prisoners, that the insurrection had been caused solely by the oppressive proceedings of the commission and the cruelties of their military tools. But the privy council were anxious to extort from them a confession, that there had been a wide-spread conspiracy for the overthrow of the government. For this purpose they had recourse to the torture of the boot—an oblong wooden box, firmly hooped with iron, in which the leg of the person about to be tortured was inclosed. There were loose plates of iron placed in this box, and wedges were inserted between them and the solid frame, and driven down with a hammer, which caused intolerable pain, mangling the limb in a most shocking manner. Among the prisoners subjected to this diabolical torture, special mention is made of Neilson of Corsack and Hugh M'Kail. The former was a country gentleman, eminent for his piety and amiability, who had been goaded into rebellion by the most shameful ill-treatment on the part of Turner and his ruthless marauders. M'Kail was a preacher only twenty-five years of age, and remarkable for piety, learning, and eloquence. He was tortured in the boot till the bone of his leg was splintered, and he swooned under the torment. Both Neilson and he declared to the last that the rising was unpremeditated, and was caused solely by the barbarities of the soldiers.* They were put to death in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh, rejoicing

* Kirton, p. 252.

that they were counted worthy to suffer for the gospel of Christ. The noble burst of eloquence with which the address delivered by M'Kail on the scaffold concluded, has been often quoted and admired; and such was the impression that it produced on the crowd of spectators, that on subsequent occasions the trumpets were blown and the drums beaten in order to drown the last words of the sufferers.

As if the vengeance of the government were not yet satiated, the barbarities of martial law were now added to the cruelties of judicial punishment. A body of soldiers under Generals Dalzell and Drummond were sent to scour the counties of Ayr, Dumfries, and Galloway, and to hunt down the remnant of the covenanting party. General Tom Dalzell, as he was usually termed, was a soldier of some reputation, but of ferocious character. He had borne arms under the Czar of Muscovy, in whose service he had become inured to torture, pillage, and bloodshed. His personal hatred of the Covenanters, combined with his innate severity of temper hardened by a long career of barbarity, led him to inflict the most shocking cruelties on the defenceless peasantry. So fierce did the persecution become, that many of the Covenanters in the west and south abandoned their homes, and sought refuge in caves and mountain fastnesses, while the more timid conformed to the episcopal system. "All the people," says Bishop Burnet, "were struck with such terror that they came regularly to church; and the clergy were so delighted with it that they used to speak of that time as the poets do of the golden age. They never interceded for any compassion to their people, nor did they care to live more regularly, or to labour more carefully. They looked on the soldiery as their patrons; they were ever in their company, complying with them in their excesses; and (if they were not much wronged) they rather led them into than checked them for them."*

It was an old maxim of the Scotch law,

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 349.

that no person could be accused and convicted in his absence; but the servile judges of the Court of Session were now induced by the officers of State to alter this rule, and to declare that the Court of Justiciary might pronounce sentence of death and forfeiture in the absence of the accused. The object of this tampering with law and justice, was to reach the more opulent of the Covenanters, who had withdrawn from the country till the storm should pass over, and whose estates, therefore, could not be legally confiscated.* Accordingly twenty-two gentlemen, who were alleged to have been implicated in the Pentland rising, were arraigned in their absence, and condemned to be put to death whenever they could be apprehended; and their estates were conferred on Drummond and Dalzell.

As the war with Holland originated in mercantile claims and complaints, rather than any dispute about territorial possessions, both parties soon inclined to peace; and no obstacle to so desirable an object could be supposed to intervene except a feeling of mortified pride on the side of the Dutch, whose flag had been compelled to retire before that of England. The French king was not less desirous to bring hostilities to a close, as he had other ends to pursue which could not be accomplished if Charles were his enemy. Commissioners from the different belligerent powers met at Breda, where, if all of them had been in earnest, the preliminaries might have been soon settled. But De Witt, cherishing the grudge excited in his breast by the attack made by Holmes on the African factories, had secretly resolved that the Republic should not lay down arms until she had obtained an adequate revenge. The English sovereign, relying on the favourable result of the negotiation, had reduced his fleet, and thereby afforded to the Pensionary the opportunity for which he so earnestly longed. De Ruyter accordingly was despatched from the Texel in the month of

* Sir G. Mackenzie's *Laws and Customs in Matters Criminal*, p. 59. Woodrow, vol. i. p. 384.

May with a squadron of seventy ships, with which he soon occupied the mouths of the Thames and the Medway. The works at Sheerness were destroyed; the vessels and the arsenal at Chatham were burnt, all the traders on the river, as far as Gravesend, were taken or dispersed; and the surrounding country subjected to military exactions, as if it had been regularly conquered. Precautions were adopted to defend the capital from this sudden invasion; batteries were erected, and hulks were sunk in the navigable part of the stream: but it soon appeared that the purpose of the expedition did not extend so far, and that it was confined to retaliation, or meant as a solace to the offended honour of the republican president. De Ruyter, after spreading alarm along the shores of the Channel, returned in triumph to his own land *

This national humiliation was deeply felt by all parties and all classes of the community, except by the king himself and his dissolute courtiers. It is said that on the very day when the roar of the Dutch guns was heard by the citizens, and the ships of war which lay at Chatham were in flames, Charles feasted with the ladies of his seraglio, and amused himself with hunting a moth about the supper-room. In the council it was seriously proposed that, if the enemy advanced, the town should be abandoned. Great multitudes of people assembled in the streets, crying out that England had been sold to the enemy by men who, it was known, were making large fortunes, while the sailors were mutinying for very hunger. The populace vented their indignation on those greedy and shameless speculators by attacking their carriages when they appeared on the streets; and at one time it seemed likely that the government would have to deal at once with an invasion and an insurrection.

Louis, whose main object in all the windings of his policy was the conquest of Flanders, had already begun his march to

the frontiers with an army of seventy thousand men; a movement which accelerated the conclusion of the treaty with the Dutch, and established so far the repose of Europe. It has been imagined that the success of De Ruyter at the Nore contributed to accomplish the peace of Breda; an absurd insinuation, though supported by the opinion of the French king. For in point of fact, the English people, insulted and enraged, would most willingly have continued the war, in the hope of wiping away the stain which an unguarded moment had brought upon them. The conditions could not be pronounced unfavourable to Britain, inasmuch as her conquests in America and the West Indies were secured, and, in other respects, the contending parties were placed very nearly in the same condition in which they had commenced hostilities; but, nevertheless, the subjects of Charles were discontented; their prospects seemed darkened, and their tempers were soured. In Parliament, too, the popular interest had been gaining ground, and was becoming daily more formidable to those who directed the measures and depended on the influence of the court. Buckingham, whose caprice or vindictive passions had placed him at the head of the Opposition, now possessed so much power as to treat on his own terms with the confidential friends of the monarch, and the restoration of this intriguing duke to the smiles of royalty implied the downfall of the more virtuous but less accommodating Clarendon *

As the chief minister of the crown, Hyde shared in the unpopularity of all the severe measures to which a revolution necessarily gives birth. The Roman Catholics disliked him for the disabilities to which they were subjected; and the Presbyterians were not less hostile to him on account of the broken pledges of which they openly complained. His hot temper, his arrogant demeanour, the eagerness with which he grasped riches, and the ostentation with which he squandered

* Life of James II vol. i. p. 425 Pepya, vol. iii. pp 156-170.

* For the opinion of Louis XIV as to the effect of De Ruyter's enterprise, see his works, vol. ii p. 815.

them, had raised him up a host of enemies. In reference to politics, again, the cavaliers attributed the neglect under which they laboured to the selfish views of the chancellor; while the partizans of the Commonwealth ascribed to his hatred of their persons and cause the judicial cruelties inflicted on the most distinguished members of their body. The populace, in their turn, laid on him the blame of advising the king to sell Dunkirk; while the splendid mansion he built in London gave some countenance to the unfounded suspicions, propagated by his enemies, that he had either participated in the price, or received bribes from the French government. These causes, which operated with more or less effect on the public mind, now met with corresponding feelings in the mind of Charles, who had sometimes occasion to regard his faithful counsellor in the light of a tutor, who addressed to him admonitions which were not only very sharp, but, what the king disliked still more, very long. It is said that his Majesty had to encounter in his chancellor's uncompromising principles an insuperable bar to some of his favourite schemes in love, as well as in legislation, though there is not, assuredly, any good reason for imagining that the marriage of the duke of Richmond with the beautiful Miss Stewart could have any weight in the balance which already preponderated against the earl*. But the debauched and worthless crowd of royal favourites, men and women, detested a minister who on his part lost no opportunity of showing his scorn of the mimics, revellers, and courtesans who haunted the palace, while the other office-holders hated

him because he was invariably stern and overbearing. "Scarcely any voice was raised in favour of a minister loaded with the double odium of faults which roused the fury of the people, and of virtues which annoyed and importuned the sovereign."

The first step taken by the king in this ungracious measure was the transference of the great seal to Sir Orlando Bridgman, a person whose want of firmness, and perhaps of knowledge, rendered him very unfit for his high office. When Parliament assembled on the 10th of October, a committee of the Commons came to the resolution that Clarendon should be impeached of treason; but as no particulars were specified on which such a charge could be legally supported, the Lords refused to receive it at their bar. Charles at this stage used his personal influence with the earl to induce him to leave the kingdom privately, an advice to which the other refused to listen, because to relinquish the defence of his character by a precipitate retreat, might not unjustly be considered as equivalent to a confession of guilt. At length, a message to the same effect, conveyed through the duke of York, left him no alternative. He crossed to Calais in a dark and rough November night, and an Act was soon after passed which doomed him to perpetual exile. He spent the remainder of his days in France, deploring the fate of his country, and smarting under the ingratitude of a prince whom he had long served with ability and fidelity. He employed his time in preparing for the press those valuable works which will preserve his name to distant ages, and prove a monument much more honourable than the trophies of faction, or the honours bestowed by an ungrateful and profligate sovereign.

* Clarendon's Life, p. 434. Pepys, vol. iii. p. 276. Life of James II., vol. i. p. 898.

CHAPTER X—A.D. 1668–1678

CHARLES II.

THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE—TERMS PROPOSED—THE “EVENTUAL TREATY”—ANGRY DISCUSSIONS IN PARLIAMENT—THE CABAL ADMITTED TO POWER—CASE OF SKINNER—SECRET TREATY BETWEEN CHARLES AND LOUIS—DOUBTS OF THE KING’S SINCERITY—DEATH OF THE DUCHESS OF ORLEANS—SUPPLIES GRANTED FOR THE NAVY—PROCEEDINGS AGAINST ROMAN CATHOLICS—THE ADVENTURES OF COLONEL BLOOD—THE DUTCH INSULTED BY ENGLISH SHIPS OF WAR—THE EXCHEQUER IS SHUT—BATTLE OF SOLEBAY—SUCCESS OF THE FRENCH BY LAND—NEW ELECTION DURING THE RECESS—PARLIAMENT MEETS AND GRANTS A LIBERAL SUPPLY—DECLARATION OF INDULGENCE RECALLED—COMMONS ANXIOUS FOR THE SAFETY OF THE CHURCH—INTRODUCTION OF THE TEST ACT—SOME ROMAN CATHOLICS RESIGN OFFICE—THE DUKE OF YORK’S MARRIAGE TO MARY D’ESTE—GROWING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KING—SEVERAL SEA-FIGHTS WITH THE DUTCH—PEACE WITH HOLLAND—MEETING OF PARLIAMENT—NEW TEST PROPOSED—CHARLES SELLS HIMSELF TO LOUIS—PROCLAMATION AGAINST NON-CONFORMISTS—PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLES—FIRMNESS OF THE SPEAKER—NON-RESISTING TEST PROPOSED—PARLIAMENT PROROGUED—CHARLES ACTS AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND THE DUTCH—STATE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—ALLIANCE OF THE KING WITH LOUIS XIV—MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE WITH THE PRINCESS MARY—THE IMPOSTOR LUZANCY

THE year 1668 was rendered remarkable by the Triple Alliance, the origin of which must be sought in the political relations of Spain. This great monarchy, owing to a variety of circumstances, had been rapidly verging towards decline, while the course of events, as well as the personal character of her king, had added much vigour to the counsels of France. When Louis married a daughter of Philip IV., he was required to make a formal renunciation of all claims to every part of the Spanish dominions, but afterwards, under various pretexts, he declared himself entitled to the sovereignty of Brabant, and prepared to enforce his right at the head of a formidable army, commanded by the celebrated Turenne. As no means were employed to resist him, his progress was rapid and decisive; many of the principal towns opening their gates without firing a gun, or presenting a single soldier in the field. The other nations of Europe could not fail to be struck with alarm at

such ambitious projects, urged by a sovereign who always boasted a greater regard for his own glory, than for any considerations of justice or sound policy. In particular the States-general, trembling at the thought of so formidable a neighbour, expressed a strong desire to have a barrier erected against his schemes of conquest, and with this view they suggested proposals to the minister of England for a confederacy of the maritime powers, who, by availing themselves of their command of the sea, might save Flanders in the first instance, and ultimately prevent the subjection of all Spain to the French crown. It was obvious, indeed, to all the world that, if the renunciation made in the Treaty of the Pyrenees was not valid, the death of the sickly child, Charles II, would place in the hands of Louis all the territories, on both continents, which had been governed by his father-in-law, the late king.

The adjustment of the terms was left to Sir William Temple, on the part of England,

and to De Witt, the head of the republican party in Holland; and the object of the former was to construct such a treaty as should compel the French to relinquish all their conquests in the Netherlands. But the latter was too well acquainted with the temper of the warlike monarch, whose spirit his people had imbibed, to countenance a proposition so little likely to be received, and learning that Louis was willing to relinquish all his pretensions, founded on the rights of his queen, on condition of being either allowed to retain the cities and provinces which he had already secured by the sword, or of receiving, in place of them, Franche-Comté, Cambray, Charleroi, and St Omer, De Witt deemed it wiser to adopt this basis as the ground of a negotiation. No time was lost in concluding an alliance between the contracting parties, to which Sweden was forthwith induced to accede, and though neither France nor Spain was satisfied, both of them found it convenient to settle the important points at issue by allowing their ambassadors to concur in the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

Several different motives have been ascribed to Louis, in order to account for his easy acceptance of terms which were known to be disagreeable to him, and which, it is imagined, he would not have proposed, had he not contemplated an insuperable obstacle in the constitution of the States-general. His favourite commanders, Condé and Turenne, are said to have counselled an instant rejection of the peace, as interfering with the aggrandizement of his throne, as well as the promotion of his personal fame, and in turning aside this temptation, so congenial to his heart, he is understood to have listened to his ministers, who recommended that he should be content with the alternative that he had himself suggested. But the publication of the works which bear his name, nearly a hundred years afterwards, revealed a reason of which even his cabinet were probably ignorant. Anticipating the death of the young king of Spain, he had secretly concluded with the Emperor Leopold what is called the "Even-

tual" Treaty, the purpose of which was the partition of that monarchy; and in his arrangements with the German ruler he had already bound himself to follow the very course which the allies thought proper to dictate at Aix-la-Chapelle, as the only security for a general pacification.* On this ground some historians have spoken slightly of the Triple Alliance, and have denied that it averted the career of the French monarch, and preserved Europe from his ambition. But these writers have overlooked the important fact that there is no reason whatever to suppose that Louis would have adhered to his proposals and promises if the Triple Alliance had not been formed. He had at this very time refused to agree to an armistice, and had made all necessary arrangements for a winter campaign. In the very week in which this alliance was concluded Franche Comté was invaded by the French, and in three weeks the whole province was conquered. It is well known that the annexation of this province to France, was one of Louis' most fondly cherished projects. But the interposition of the three powers compelled him to disgorge his prey, and to rest satisfied with being allowed to retain Lille, Tournay, and some other places of strength in Flanders. There is no reason to doubt, therefore, that the prevailing impression at the time was correct, and that the French king was really arrested in his progress by this famous league.

Peace abroad did not secure tranquillity at home, for, though the influence which the country had resumed in the affairs of the great European commonwealth was gratifying to the people, the elements of discord were by no means removed. The wants of the king, which were increased by his thoughtlessness and profusion, were such as to create a constant dependence on the House of Commons, who, jealous of public liberty, and not much attached to the court, voted their supplies in a parsimonious spirit. When Parliament met on the 8th of Febru-

ary, his Majesty laid before them an account of his debts incurred during the late war, pressed upon them the necessity of repairing the fleet, and having it ready for sea, and concluded by declaring his readiness to confide whatever money they should grant to the hands of commissioners, appointed by the House, who should superintend the disbursement of it in the public service. But the members were more disposed to condemn the failures which had occurred in the course of hostilities, than to defray the unavoidable expenses, nor was it until they had given vent to their indignation against certain individuals of high rank, that they consented to relieve the necessities of the government. On other subjects, too, they manifested an equal inclination to oppose the wishes of Charles. At all times he had shown himself very anxious to procure an indulgence in favour of Roman Catholics and dissenters; and now, when Clarendon was removed and Buckingham in the seat of power, another attempt was made to obtain the consent of Parliament to a relaxation of the penal laws. This proposal roused to a great height the anger and suspicion of the lower House, who, instead of listening to the claims of any description of nonconformists, voted an address for a proclamation against conventicles.

The administration of affairs was now in the hands of that knot of persons usually known by the name of the Cabal—Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, and Lauderdale, and never, it has been said, was there a more profligate or dangerous cabinet in England, or one more noted for pernicious counsels. One of the charges against the late chancellor was, that he had concentrated all the offices of government in his single person; and to avoid this imputation, it was announced by the new ministers, through the *Gazette*, that the public business would be henceforth administered by committees, under the several heads of Foreign Affairs, the Army and Navy, Trade and Navigation, Complaints and Grievances; an arrangement that promised a degree of convenience

and order which was never fully realized. The character of Buckingham seems to have combined in it much personal baseness with political dishonesty. He professed himself the friend of the nonconformists, while he set at defiance all the restraints of religion, and the decencies of social life; and he patronized the democratic section of the House of Commons, while he encouraged the king in the most unconstitutional of his actions. He talked of patriotism and public liberty in the language of Brutus; and at the same time disregarded the rights of all orders of men as often as they stood in the way of his own selfish views.

During the greater part of this reign the two Houses had co-operated, in good humour, for the promotion of the national honour and security, little mindful of those small points of etiquette in support of which they have sometimes sacrificed their highest duties to the country. Two years prior to the date at which we have now arrived, a private merchant, named Skinner, addressed to the king in council a complaint against the East India Company, for certain injuries he had sustained at the hands of their agents in foreign parts. The matter, at the suggestion of his Majesty, was referred to the House of Peers, as the supreme court of law in the nation, a jurisdiction, however, which was not admitted by the representatives of the company, who maintained that the cause could only come before them in their capacity of appeal judges. Their lordships, notwithstanding, took the case into consideration, and after pronouncing the complainant entitled to damages, appointed a committee of their number to assess the amount. When Parliament met in the spring of 1668, the directors presented a petition to the Commons, craving protection against the decision of the other House, who, though it was voted by the Peers a scandalous libel, viewed its prayer in so favourable a light as to pass resolutions censuring the proceedings of the upper House, as inconsistent equally with law and precedent. On this ground open war

was declared between the two Houses; each obstinately maintained its own pretensions; the Lords resolved to pass no bill, except that of supply; and the Commons rejected one which had been sent to them for the regulation of the trial of Peers. The month of May had been fixed by the king for the prorogation, and early in the morning of the day fixed upon, the Commons sent a message to the Lords, proposing that all proceedings should be suspended during the recess. As no answer was returned, they forthwith resolved that whoever should put in execution the orders or sentence of the House of Lords, in the case of Skinner, should be deemed a traitor to the liberties of Englishmen, and an infringer of the privileges of the House of Commons. Charles having given his consent to the bills which were prepared, ordered the two Houses to adjourn, and expressed a hope that, before he should meet them again, some expedient might be discovered for the accommodation of this difference. The Commons obeyed, but the Lords, continuing to sit, called before them the governor of the company, and committed him to the custody of the Black Rod, until he should pay to the king a fine of three hundred pounds.*

There can be no doubt that the Triple Alliance, though highly popular both in Parliament and in the country, had been concluded by the king solely for the purpose of quieting the discontents of the people, and that from the outset he had resolved to free himself from its restraints at the first opportunity. He was galled by the interference of Parliament with the mode in which the public money was squandered on the royal favourites, and was eager to emancipate himself from the restrictions placed alike on his schemes and his pleasures by the constitution. It had become manifest, too, that he hated the Dutch, whose

principles, deeply tinged with democratical freedom, seemed to present a bad example to his own subjects, and whose maritime power excited at once his jealousy and resentment. Influenced by such feelings, he did not cordially enforce the provisions of the Triple League, but rather connived at the aggressions of the French monarch on the Spanish dependencies, the defence of which was the main object and avowed purpose of that celebrated treaty. De Witt, who at no time reposed much confidence in the sincerity of the English government, received notice from the Swedish ambassador, when passing through Holland on his return from Paris, that the whole cabinet of London had been bribed by the French monarch, and were ready to promote his views. The duke of York, whose attachment to the Romish ritual had been long suspected, avowed about this period his entire conversion to the old religion, as it was sometimes called; and it is now generally believed by historians, that his royal brother seized the opportunity of declaring his preference for the same faith, as well as his resolution to countenance it, even in his own dominions. But Charles had another object in view, on which his heart was much more set than on the establishment of the Romish faith in England. He was bent, in the first instance, on the destruction of the constitution, rather than on the overthrow of the English church. He was well aware that he could not accomplish this without the employment of a standing army, and that it was impossible for him to obtain the necessary funds for this purpose from an English Parliament. He was therefore compelled to seek foreign aid in the accomplishment of his nefarious schemes. His counsellors, Arlington and Clifford, before whom he declared his purpose of throwing off the mask, advised him "to do the great work in conjunction with France, and with the assistance of his Most Christian Majesty, the House of Austria not being in a condition to help in it." In pursuance of this

* State Trials, vol. vi. p. 710. Lords' Journal, vol. xii. p. 490. Parl. History, vol. iv. p. 422. Sir Samuel Barnardiston, the name of the governor, remained in custody from the middle of May till the 10th of August, and by whose authority he was at length discharged, he knew not. Langard, vol. xii. p. 196.

resolution, M de Croissy Colbert was to be intrusted with the secret, in order to inform his master of it, and receive power to treat about it with the British sovereign. The negotiations lasted during several months, and it was not till May, 1670, that the agreement between the two crowns was signed and sealed at Dover; the purport of which was, that Louis was to give two hundred thousand pounds a year, in quarterly payments, the first advance to be made when the ratifications were exchanged, that when the Roman Catholic religion should be settled in England, the king was to join with France in making war upon Holland; and that, in case of success, the French monarch and the Prince of Orange were to be gratified with portions of the territory most suitable to them, while Charles was to obtain certain seaports, with the adjoining land. In plain terms, Charles by this treaty "bound himself to make a public profession of the Roman Catholic religion, to join his arms to those of Louis for the purpose of destroying the power of the United Provinces, and to employ the whole strength of England, by land and sea, in support of the rights of the House of Bourbon to the vast monarchy of Spain. Louis on the other hand engaged to take his royal brother with his pay, and promised that if any insurrection should break out in England, he would send an army at his own charge to support his ally." "The French," it is added, "had a great mind to have begun with the war of Holland first; but Lord Arundel being sent again over into France, convinced the king of the necessity of beginning first with the Catholicity here, and so it was at last adjusted, and the first payments began according to the articles."*

As to the reality of the treaty there is no room for a difference of opinion; but the fact of the royal conversion at this date, and the sincerity with which it was professed, do not come down to us on grounds equally certain. Without any breach of charity, it may be inferred from the general

* Life of James II., vol. i p 442.

character of the king that his religious impressions were not sufficiently strong to have led him to a declaration which would have endangered his crown, merely for the sake of a favourite creed. He had told his sister the duchess of Orleans, the chief agent in concocting the treaty, when he met her at Dover, that he was not so well satisfied with the Roman Catholic religion, or his own condition, as to make it his faith; and there is some appearance of evidence that, with regard to his ostensible motives in this transaction, he was labouring to deceive both his brother and the French monarch. It is true the latter did not require an immediate avowal of the supposed change in the religious convictions of Charles, being aware that a vast majority of the English were hostile to the Church of Rome, and also perceiving very clearly the hazard of a violent insurrection which the other possessed no means of suppressing. At Christmas, in the year 1669, his Majesty received the holy communion as formerly, and though he was not as on similar occasions accompanied by James, the public, ignorant of the secret negotiation with France, made no particular observation.*

The sudden death of the duchess of Orleans, who is supposed to have been poisoned by her husband in a fit of jealousy, afforded to the British sovereign an opportunity of drawing his political relations with Louis to a practical issue. The duke of Buckingham was despatched to Paris, ostensibly for the purpose of condoling with the court on the loss of Henrietta, but in reality to concert measures for commencing war against Holland. Nor were the Dutch, on their part, blind to the true object of this mission, attended with so many circum-

* The treaty itself is published in the Appendix to Dr. Lingard's twelfth volume, from the original manuscript in the possession of Lord Clifford, and from inspecting that document it will appear James, or the compiler of his Life, was ignorant of many important particulars provided for by the contracting parties. It was not thought safe to intrust Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale with the king's intention of turning Roman Catholic. A false treaty, in which the article concerning religion was omitted, was shown to them. The names and seals of Clifford and Arlington are affixed to the genuine treaty.

stances calculated to excite their suspicions. The residence of Sir William Temple, as the minister of England, continued indeed to give them confidence, being satisfied that a man of so much integrity and honour could not be induced to take any share in a plot, at once inconsistent with the spirit of treaties and the interests of his country Charles, aware of this impression, allowed the ambassador to remain long after he had resolved to break with the Republic; and even when he did recall him, he used the pretence of business which required Sir William's presence at home, whence, however, he might soon be expected to return.

When Parliament assembled in October, 1670, the pecuniary necessities of the government were, as usual, the leading topics of the royal speech. Allusions were made to the great increase of the naval power of France, coupled with a reference to the decayed condition of his own navy, which had received no care since the late war with Holland. The fleet has ever been an object of attention with the English people, and on this occasion they could not conceal from themselves that their ships were not equal, either in number or equipment, to those of some other nations with whom they might have again to dispute the sovereignty of the ocean. The Commons, therefore, gave a favourable hearing to the chancellor when enforcing his Majesty's arguments, and voted such a sum as might enable him to put to sea at least fifty sail, and thereby to discharge the obligations he owed to the welfare of Europe, and more especially to the maintenance of the Triple Alliance. The debate on the supplies was rendered memorable by a private incident, which threatened to involve the nation in a flame of discontent. Speaking of ways and means, a certain member suggested a tax on the theatres, and when it was replied that the players were the king's servants, and ought not to be subjected to any impost, Sir John Coventry inquired, in a jocular manner, whether "his Majesty's pleasure lay among the men or the women

players?" The expression gave much offence at court, and it was resolved by some of the courtiers to employ a gang of bullies to punish the offender. They accordingly waylaid Sir John in the evening when returning to his house; and after throwing him on the ground they made a deep incision in his nose with a penknife. This ignoble revenge, perpetrated, it was believed, with the connivance of Charles, created among the Commons the liveliest indignation and accordingly when they met in January, after the recess, they passed a resolution not to proceed with the public business until reparation were made for the gross injury inflicted on one of their body. The king was fain to conciliate the members, whose privileges had been so brutally invaded, he had to submit to the humiliation of passing an Act which attainted the instruments of his revenge, and which took from him the power of pardoning them. And that nothing of a similar nature should again pass with impunity, a statute known by the name of the Coventry Act was passed, which rendered maiming or disfiguring the person a capital crime.*

The Conventicle Act had expired in the beginning of the year—a circumstance which, as it was connected with the hopes and fears of a powerful body in the state, produced some embarrassment to the government. The royal family, actuated, it may be presumed, by a variety of motives, were at all times favourably disposed towards some such measure as might, by a judicious comprehension, admit the orthodox dissenters to the benefit of the establishment, and at the same moment extend indulgence to those whose principles were incompatible with a more entire union. Hales, the cele-

* The young duke of Monmouth, who was esteemed the contriver of the outrage, escaped without punishment, and Coventry is said to have died a Catholic, leaving the greater part of his estates to the college of Jesuits at St Omer. Burnet, Own Times, vol. 1 p. 469, note. Burnet adds that the duke of York told him, "he said all he could to divert the king from the resolution he took, which was to send some of his guards and watch in the streets where Sir John lodged, and leave a mark upon him." Coventry defended himself with great courage, and wounded one of the gang of cowardly ruffians, named O'Brien.

brated chief justice, was intrusted at present with this delicate undertaking; and he even proceeded so far as to draw the outline of an Act whereby the interest of all denominations might be reconciled, and the bitterness of their mutual enmity subdued. On one side, the opinions of Wilkins, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Burton were weighed as the ground of an amicable arrangement, and balanced, on the other side, against those of Bates, Manton, and Baxter. The result in this case corresponded, in all respects, to the former experience of the country, as to the futility of conferences and proposed concessions, when questions affecting the conscience are concerned. Neither party was convinced, and both refused to yield the only points of controversy, the removal of which would have afforded a common ground to stand upon. The public mind, meanwhile, became strongly excited; and the House of Commons, not unnaturally, received the infection of the prevailing sentiment. A bill for the suppression of conventicles was accordingly sent to the Peers, where, owing to the influence of the duke of York and the presbyterian lords, it encountered a vigorous opposition, and might perhaps have been rejected, had not the king found it expedient to interfere in favour of the intolerant statute. It is remarkable that, in defence of the church, the lower House were disposed to proceed much further than either the bishops or the lay aristocracy. The fear of popery on the one hand, and the dread of puritanical despotism on the other, carried the English gentlemen of that age into measures which savoured very little of the general liberality of their character, and this remark applies to both sections of the kingdom, the north as well as the south, where the patrons of persecution were seen to step forth from that class of society which is usually the most propitious to freedom of thought and the protection of civil rights. No circumstance, assuredly, could exhibit in a more vivid light the impression made on the educated portion of the people, of the evils which had been endured, in the pre-

ceding generations, from the reign of a degrading superstition and of a rampant fanaticism.

The new Conventicle Act was followed at no distant period by proceedings against the Roman Catholics. Complaints were heard that the adherents of popery were increasing in number and presumption; that Jesuits and priests were seen everywhere, that English subjects frequented the chapels of foreign ambassadors, that mass was celebrated in private houses, that convicted recreants were permitted to go unpunished; that schools and convents were openly established, and that in Ireland there was a regular hierarchical establishment in full operation. Charles, though he had already bound himself by treaty to profess the same religion, issued a proclamation against it; assuring his good subjects that, as he had ever adhered, against all temptation, to the established faith, so he would always employ his utmost care and zeal in its maintenance and defence, a measure which fully justifies those who accuse him of dissimulation, and which must have perplexed the thoughts of all such as were acquainted with his real sentiments. A more severe system of restraint was meditated under the sanction of Parliament, and would it is probable have been instantly enforced, had not a question of privilege so completely divided the two Houses, that, to prevent an unseemly schism, the king deemed it proper to adjourn their meeting.

The desperate adventures of Colonel Blood form an interesting episode in this portion of English history. Having been found guilty of taking part in a conspiracy against the government of Ireland, he determined to have his revenge on the duke of Ormond, the lord-lieutenant. With this intention he repaired to London, where he soon found an opportunity of seizing his grace's person when riding in his coach through the streets, at a late hour of the evening. He had resolved to drag his victim to Tyburn, and hang him on the common gallows; but, partly by stratagem and partly by the season-

able aid of his servants, the duke escaped, without, however, having been able to recognize any of the individuals who had perpetrated upon him so savage an act of violence. The share which Blood had in this transaction was soon brought to light, owing to a bold attempt made by him and his associates to steal the crown and other regalia from the Tower. Assuming the dress of a clergyman, he easily obtained access to the jewel-room, upon which he bound the keeper, possessed himself of the precious articles under his charge, and made off with every prospect of impunity. But the appearance of young Edwards, the son of the keeper, who arrived just in time to give the alarm, enabled the guard to overtake the fugitives, who had already escaped beyond the walls of the fortress. The colonel, when examined before Sir Gilbert Talbot, refused at first either to answer in his own defence or to give any information relative to his associates, nor was it till he found himself in the presence of the king, that he avowed his design to murder Ormond, and confessed the meditated robbery now described. He even told his Majesty that he had on one occasion undertaken to shoot him, that he had proceeded so far as actually to take an aim at his royal person; but added, with seasonable flattery, that the awe inspired by the very presence of a monarch had unnerved his hands, and made the blunderbuss drop harmless to the ground. He further stated that the number of his confederates was not less than three hundred, and that they had bound themselves by an oath to revenge one another's death, should any of them fall victims to the law. Charles, it is said, was touched pleasantly in his vanity, and very unpleasantly in his fears, and thought it advisable to propitiate rather than to punish such a desperado. Blood was not only pardoned, but received the grant of an estate in Ireland, worth five hundred pounds a year. Evelyn, who met him at dinner at the lord-treasurer's shortly after this adventure, styles him "an impudent bold fellow, who had not only a daring, but a villainous

unmerciful look, and a false countenance." But this villain was not only admitted into the society of the courtiers and ministers, but became a personal favourite of the king himself; was constantly seen about Whitehall, "and by a particular affectation oftenest in the very room where the duke of Ormond was." "All the world," says Carte, "stood amazed at this mercy, countenance, and favour showed to so atrocious a malefactor, the reasons and meaning of which they could not see nor comprehend. The general opinion at the time was, that Blood was put upon the assassination by the duke of Buckingham and the duchess of Cleveland (late Lady Castlemaine), who both hated the duke of Ormond mortally.*"

A rupture with the Dutch was, at this time, sought by the English government on the most shallow and dishonest pretences. The secret alliance between Charles and the French king, whose ambitious views now began to become apparent, was unquestionably the cause of this hostile feeling towards the people of Holland. At all events, a resolution seems to have been formed by the two monarchs to rekindle the flame which had been so short a time extinguished, and to involve the principal nations of Europe in a bloody war. The first manifestation of this unwise policy appeared when a ship was sent to Amsterdam to carry home the wife of the ambassador, the captain of which received orders to fire upon the Dutch fleet as he passed their anchorage, until they should be provoked to return the cannonade. He complied with these disgraceful instructions, to the great surprise of the peaceful squadron; but upon being remonstrated with by Van Ghent, the admiral, he desisted, for which exercise of discretion he was, upon his landing in the Thames, sent as a prisoner to the Tower.

This insult to an independent nation was soon afterwards aggravated by a direct attack on their commerce. The Smyrna merchantmen, whose cargoes were valued at more than fifteen hundred thousand

* *Life of the Duke of Ormond*

pounds, were attacked on their passage to the coast of Holland by Sir Robert Holmes and the earl of Ossory, who at first endeavoured to accomplish their object by an act of the vilest treachery. The Dutch admiral, to whom notice of his danger had been conveyed, defeated both the meditated fraud and the actual violence; for after sustaining the assault of his enemy during the greater part of two days, he conducted his convoy into port with only a slight loss. Nor were the ministers of Charles satisfied with an irregular attack on a friendly state; they also recommended the adoption of a measure remarkable alike for its dishonesty and its folly. It had, since the establishment of the Commonwealth, become common for the government to borrow money from the goldsmiths of London, who were then also bankers, on the security of the public revenue; allowing a liberal interest to the lender on the advances made by him to the exchequer. Pressed by his wants, the king listened to the advice of his privy councillors, who suggested that the principal in the hands of the treasurer might be retained during a certain period, without the payment of the usual dividend to the stockholder, in other words, with the view of meeting the royal necessities, they might inflict on the country all the evils of a national bankruptcy. The plea urged by his Majesty, even if well founded, could not have justified such a breach of public faith. In consequence of this flagitious act the bankers were unable to meet their own engagements. Several great mercantile houses became bankrupt, and dismay and distress spread through all society.

In the month of March, 1672, declarations of war were issued by France and England against the Dutch, reasons being industriously sought by both powers for a determination previously formed, and which they were firmly resolved to pursue. Soon afterwards, the king of Sweden, also a party to the Triple Alliance, acceded to the designs of Charles and Louis; binding himself by a secret treaty to take arms against any

prince of the German empire who should afford aid to the States in the approaching struggle with the great monarch.

As neither side could be blind to the probable issue of recent events, both were prepared for an appeal to the law of force. The Dutch, who lavished the greatest care on their naval armaments, were ready for sea before the English had weighed anchor: and De Ruyter, with upwards of seventy men-of-war and a number of fire-ships, took his station in the Channel to prevent the junction of the French squadron under D'Estrées. At length, after a variety of manœuvres, the Dutch were compelled to retire, followed by the confederates under the command of the duke of York. On this as on every similar occasion his royal highness displayed the most striking proofs of personal courage, fighting till his ship was on the point of sinking, and then removing his flag to another. But though the honour of a triumph remained with the English, the loss on both sides was nearly equal, and the result by no means decisive.*

The success of Louis by land was much more rapid and decisive. In the course of one campaign he subdued three of the United Provinces, and even pushed his advanced posts to the gates of Amsterdam, but as so great an accession of power to the French crown could not fail to endanger the tranquillity of Europe, the conqueror was not allowed to consummate his plan of aggrandizement. Even Charles, whose political sagacity has never obtained much commendation, began to anticipate the bad effects which might arise from the uncontrolled ascendancy of his powerful neighbour, while the terms proposed to the humbled States were so extremely unfavourable, that the sympathy of other countries was excited in their behalf. The young prince of Orange, afterwards the celebrated William III, was now intrusted with the fortunes of his country, and though the army was undisciplined, the counsels of the senate distracted by fear

* *Life of James II* vol. i. pp. 460-478. *Duke of Buckingham, Works*, vol. ii. p. 14.

not less than by faction, and a host of more than a hundred thousand warriors, led by the ablest generals of the age, was already in the heart of his dominions, he rejected with scorn the conditions submitted to him by France, and threw himself on the patriotism of his people. His influence was greatly increased by the downfall of the republican party led by De Witt, the champion of democracy, who himself, it is well known, was cruelly murdered by the incensed multitude, to whose eyes he was represented as the cause of all their misfortunes. The "perpetual edict," which had been passed to prevent for ever the revival of the office of stadtholder, was repealed, and the nephew of Maurice was soon placed in a condition to employ with advantage all the resources of the commonwealth.*

But the hopes of the prince were not confined to a successful application of the means in his own power; he trusted, moreover, that the English Parliament, many of whom were dissatisfied with the war, would not renew to his uncle a grant of supplies sufficient to maintain the fleets and army. On that head, however, the expectations entertained both at home and abroad were proved equally groundless, for Charles not only prorogued the meeting of the two houses till the beginning of the following year, but he also employed the interval so skillfully as to procure a great accession of strength to the court party in the Commons. Shaftesbury, who was now made keeper of the great seal, issued writs, in virtue of his office, for new elections to fill such places as had become vacant by death or retirement; and owing to an influence which has never been fully explained, the returns were favourable to the views of government, though most of the members sent up on this occasion were dissenters†

When the legislature assembled in February, 1673, his Majesty in person, and

the lord-chancellor as his representative, endeavoured to justify the war with Holland, the shutting of the exchequer, the declaration of an indulgence to nonconformists made on the sole authority of the crown, and the legality of the writs which had been issued during the prorogation. On this last point the ministry encountered an opposition so exceedingly vigorous, that the king found it expedient to yield. A resolution was passed in the lower House pronouncing the elections void, and ordering that new writs should be sent forth to the several counties and boroughs, sanctioned by a warrant from the Speaker. Being restored to good humour by this concession, they voted a liberal supply, amounting to one million two hundred and sixty thousand pounds, for which it was more than insinuated that Charles was indebted to the zeal of two individuals on the popular side, who had condescended to accept certain favours from the treasury. But the question of religion was more difficult to manage than the pecuniary grant, for a majority of the members had determined that the Declaration of Indulgence should be recalled or rendered void. It was in vain that the courtiers pleaded in support of the royal prerogative the usages of former times, insisting that, unless a dispensing power were lodged somewhere, much inconvenience would result from the execution of the law in particular cases. The House was deaf to all such arguments, and after a long debate it was decided, by a considerable preponderance of numbers, that "penal statutes in matters ecclesiastical cannot be suspended but by Act of Parliament." His Majesty, unwilling to recede from his purpose, attempted to gain the support of the Peers, but they, reluctant to come to a collision with the Commons, whose judgment appeared at once safe and constitutional, advised him to conform to the wishes of Parliament. The dread of popular commotions, of which some symptoms were already apparent, added to the voice of the national representatives, at

* Temple, Works, vol. ii p. 81. Burnet, Own Times, vol. i. p. 567.

† Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV. sub ann. 1672, Basnage, vol. ii sub ann. 1672; Temple, vol. ii. p. 812; Burnet, vol. i. p. 574.

length induced the facile monarch to relinquish his pretensions to the dispensing power; and accordingly, with his usual frankness, he cancelled the offensive document, and thereby replaced the dissenters in their wonted position with reference to the Act of Uniformity. So deeply had the people interested themselves in this discussion, that when the result was made known in the city an illumination, and other tokens of joy, were instantly ordered in all the streets of the metropolis *

It must be manifest to every reader that the fear of popery was the moving spring in all these transactions; while nothing connected with them seems more unaccountable than that the Protestant dissenters should have deserted the throne, now the seat of religious freedom, and co-operated with the Opposition, who seemed desirous to confirm the reign of ecclesiastical tyranny. The only explanation of such feelings and proceedings will be found in the state of the royal family, by some of whom the Romish creed was already openly professed, and in the horror entertained by the great body of the nation with respect to a popish successor. The safety of the church, in such circumstances, was very naturally identified with the stability of the reformed faith throughout Europe, and with the permanence of free institutions in England, and upon this ground Baxter and his followers chose rather to live under the cloud of penal laws than to enjoy the brightest sunshine, if it must be shared with the enemies both of the Protestant faith and of the English constitution.

To obviate the evils which might attend the accession of the duke of York, the House of Commons voted an address to the king, requesting that he would discharge from his army every officer and soldier who should refuse to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and to receive the sacrament after the manner of the Anglican church, and to admit none thereafter into his service who had not so qualified themselves. Hav-

* Ralph, vol i p. 238

ing received a gracious answer from his Majesty, the same party proposed a further step, the object of which was to exclude from civil as well as military offices all persons who had not taken the prescribed oaths, and complied with the religious observance. Hence the origin of the Test Act, which reduced to the form of law all the provisions now stated; to which, indeed, was added a declaration against transubstantiation, to be subscribed by all persons holding office, under the penalty of five hundred pounds, and of being disabled to sue in any court of law or equity, to be guardian to any child, or executor to any person, or to take any legacy or deed of gift. The bill passed through both Houses with little opposition, and its progress in the Lords was even accelerated by some Roman Catholic peers, who countenanced it with their votes. But the same favour was not displayed towards a measure submitted to the Houses for granting relief to Protestant dissenters, for, after much reasoning on the nature and purposes of toleration, it was agreed by the Commons to limit the benefit of it to those nonconformists only whose objections to the church respected her discipline alone, and had no reference to the articles of her belief. The Lords, whose views on this subject were somewhat different, consumed the time allotted for their sitting in minute distinctions and numerous amendments, and when the festival of Easter arrived, a prorogation was announced before they could bring their sentiments to an accordance with those of the lower Chamber. The bill was accordingly lost, and the hopes of the dissenters were once more deferred, not without a painful suspicion on their part that they had been deceived by insincere professions *

It has been already remarked that these intolerant votes in the House of Commons originated in the fear of seeing a popish sovereign on the throne; and though it may appear absurd to legislate on a specu-

* Dalrymple, vol ii p. 69 Lords' Journals, vol xii p. 549 Marvell, vol i p. 494 Neal, vol ii p. 698

lative point of theology, it will be admitted that the precautions adopted were well calculated to secure their object. James, though suspected of a decided bias towards the Romish ritual, had not ceased to communicate with the English church till the year 1672; and this change in his practice was reasonably regarded as an open declaration of attachment to the older form of worship, now abjured by the laws, and abandoned by the bulk of the people. No test, therefore, could have been more adroitly selected than a belief in transubstantiation, for in this fundamental article of her faith the Romish church allows no equivocation or compromise, and as it reached to the highest classes of society, it soon produced the effect which was anticipated from its operation. The Lord Clifford, the boldest and most dangerous of that party, was obliged to retire from public business, and the duke of York, whose conversion involved the fate of all the others, found it expedient to resign the rank and emoluments of high admiral. James, it is said, was solicited by his brother to continue outwardly a Protestant, but refused; and his reasons, as they are usually given, do honour to his sincerity. He urged first his paramount obligation to his conscience and his God, next, the hazard that, instead of conciliating the nation as a Protestant, he should be denounced by the people as a concealed Romanist, having a papal dispensation for his conformity. He therefore preferred, as the lighter burden, unpopularity to deserved contempt.*

In the same year the duke, who had been for some time a widower, concluded his marriage with Mary of Este, a daughter of the house of Modena, and thereby added not a little to the abhorrence with which his religion was regarded by his brother's subjects. The Parliament, upon its reassembling in October, presented an address to the king, entreating him to forbid the celebration of the nuptial ceremony in England, and not to sanction the reception of the princess in

any part of his dominions. Charles, in reply, reminded them that, as the marriage was already solemnized by proxy, it was too late to interfere, and that as the lady was actually in Paris on her way to London, it would be extremely ungracious to send her back to the court of her mother, whose presence she had recently left protected by all the obligations of religion and honour. This statement failed to satisfy the members, who not only repeated their remonstrance, but postponed the supplies, and were even preparing an address of grievance with a degree of heat and violence unprecedented since the Restoration. To prevent matters from proceeding to an undue length, his Majesty repaired to the House of Lords, and having commanded the attendance of the Commons, he prorogued both from the 10th of November till the 7th of January, 1674.*

These expedients, to which his Majesty was now compelled to have recourse more frequently than suited the temper of the people or the character of his government, were the source of much dissatisfaction, and are even understood to have first suggested the measures which led, at no distant period, to the final expatriation of his family. As the motives of Shaftesbury were viewed by Charles with much suspicion, the great seal was taken from him and placed in the hands of Sir Heneage Finch, and the appointment of lord treasurer was, to the disappointment of Arlington, conferred upon Sir Thomas Osborne, who was at the same time raised to the rank of earl of Danby. These changes, however, were but symptoms of a deeper distemper which now began to affect the body politic. Religious fears had already combined with political discontent to such a degree, that the eyes of a large party were silently turning towards the prince of Orange as their last resource, should the interests of freedom and of the Protestant cause be menaced with any more direct attack. It

* Journal of Commons, March 12, 1673. Parliamentary History, vol. iv. p. 561

* Evelyn, Diary, vol. ii. p. 891. "This night the youths of the city burnt the pope in effigy after they had procession with it in great triumph, they being displeased at the duke for altering his religion and marrying an Italian lady."

is stated by several historians that a secret correspondence was now opened between the opposition party in the House of Commons and the States-general, though the two countries were at open war. This rumour is to a certain extent confirmed by Sir William Temple, who remarks that some members of the lower House, and even Shaftesbury himself, then chancellor, "trinkled at least with Holland, about raising seditions, and perhaps insurrections in England," in order to put an end to hostilities. The ambassador, who was desired to extract this secret, if possible, from the prince, further observes that William declined mentioning names, as dishonourable, but confessed that, "during the war, neither the States, nor he in particular, were without applications made to them from several persons and considerable in England, who would fain have engaged him to head the discontent there."*

Amidst these occurrences, his Majesty perceived that the safety, as well as the honour of his crown, required that the war with the Dutch should be brought to a close. He had expended the last grant of money on the equipment of a fleet which, as the duke had been compelled to retire from the office of lord high admiral, was intrusted to the command of Prince Rupert, aided by Sir Edward Sprague and the earl of Ossory. Having put to sea in search of the enemy, a battle took place on the 28th of May, which was attended with a result so ambiguous that each side claimed the victory. About a week afterwards, De Ruyter, who had gone into harbour to refit, presented himself once more on the ocean, when another engagement was fought with equal gallantry, and as on the former occasion, with equal claims to a triumph. It was esteemed by the Dutch a sufficient glory that their admiral, with a force considerably inferior, could encounter the combined navies of France and England without sustaining

a defeat or allowing them to commit any depredation on the coast. Provoked rather than exhausted by such unavailing conflicts, the rival commanders longed for a further opportunity to signalize their valour; and they accordingly met again near the mouth of the Texel, determined to obtain an acknowledged victory, or an honourable death. De Ruyter, in this third encounter, was assisted by Van Tromp, whose name was dear to the Dutch sailor, and found himself opposed, as in the recent fights, by Rupert, Sprague, and D'Estrées. The skill and courage of the leaders were nobly seconded by the bravery of their crews, with the exception, it is said, of the French squadron, which kept at a distance, mindful, it may be presumed, of the treatment they received from their allies on the 28th of May, when they were exposed to the heaviest fire of the enemy. After inflicting upon each other a very severe loss, the fury of the combatants on either side was somewhat allayed, and at length they separated with mutual admiration of the valour and seamanship which they had both witnessed, but without obtaining an undisputed claim to the laurels of victory.*

The advantages which the Hollanders thus owed to their own perseverance and gallantry, were greatly improved by the countenance bestowed upon their cause by the German emperor and the king of Spain. These sovereigns, alarmed by the progress of the French, and jealous of the ulterior views of Charles, had made demonstrations in favour of the prince of Orange, whose dominions, if seized by Louis, would, they saw, give a preponderating weight to that monarch, and even place the fortunes of Europe in his hands. William availed himself with great ability of the aid which was thus awarded to him. By co-operating with the imperialists under Montecucculi, he recovered several of the fortresses which had been wrested from him during the former campaign; and by cutting off the

* The authors here referred to, besides Sir William Temple himself, are Burnet and Kennet, who, though not unbiassed as writers, had the means of becoming acquainted with such facts.—*History of England* by Wallace, vol. vii. p. 128.

* *Siècle de Louis XIV* sub ann. 1678. Buckingham, Works, vol. ii. p. 25.

communication between France and the United Provinces, he made it necessary for Turenne to withdraw his army, and even to relinquish the most valuable of his conquests. When the tide of affairs had from these causes begun to ebb, the belligerents consented to the opening of a congress at Cologne under the mediation of the king of Sweden; but as the allied princes were unwilling to recede from their demands, and the States had resolved to make no further concessions, the attempt at negotiation came to an abrupt conclusion, without producing any fruits. Peace meanwhile had become indispensable to Charles, who perceived that, as the war had become very unpopular, no supplies would be granted by Parliament. He resolved, therefore, to conclude a separate treaty with his nephew, under the auspices of the Spanish ambassador, who insisted that the States should offer such terms as the English king might accept without detriment to the national honour, and which, indeed, in the present temper of his people, he would not venture to reject. The main terms were, that the Dutch should concede to Great Britain the honours of the flag in the narrow seas, and should pay the sum of eight hundred thousand crowns under the name of indemnification for the expenses of the war.*

On the 7th of January, 1674, Parliament was again called together under the administration of the new chancellor, the earl of Danby. The king in his opening speech alluded to his personal treaty with Louis, and in defence of it made the following remarks.—“You have heard much of my alliance with France, and I believe it hath been very strangely misrepresented to you, as if there were certain secret articles of dangerous consequence; but I will make no difficulty of letting the treaties, and all

the articles of them, without the least reserve, to be seen by a small committee of both Houses, who may report the true scope of them; and I assure you there is no other treaty with France, either before or since, not already printed, which shall not be made known.” This assurance was followed by a vote of thanks for the precautions adopted by him against the increase of popery; and the Commons, in a formal address, entreated that he would proclaim a general fast, to seek by prayer and supplication “a reconciliation with Almighty God, and his protection against the undermining contrivances of popish recusants, whose numbers and insolencies were greatly increased of late, and whose restless practices threatened the subversion of the church and state, all which our sins have justly deserved.”*

The zeal of the lower House was next directed to the prosecution of those obnoxious ministers who were suspected of encouraging their royal master in the prosecution of measures hurtful to the country. Buckingham, who possessed few claims to personal respect, was not ignorant of the sentiments with which he was regarded by the Commons, and in order to mollify their resentment he claimed permission to appear before them, that he might state in their hearing “some truths relating to the public.” His defence compensated by its humility for its want of truth and dignity, and though he rather blamed others than excused himself, he was allowed to retire from his Majesty’s presence and councils with no heavier punishment than the loss of all the offices which he held during pleasure. The charges brought against Arlington were not proved; and Lauderdale, though subjected to a sentence similar to that pronounced on Buckingham, was permitted, through the intervention of the king, to enjoy an equal impunity, the judgment of the House being executed on neither†.

* Dumont, tome vii. p. 242. *Lords’ Journals*, 925. *Dalrymple*, vol. ii. p. 96. *Sir William Temple, Works*, vol. ii. p. 247. There was added a secret article, that neither power should assist the enemies of the other, but this was explained to mean, not that Charles should recall the English troops serving in the French army, but that he should not suffer them to be kept up to their full complement by recruiting.

* *Parliamentary History*, vol. iv. p. 618.

† *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 648. The Lords as well as the king

In pursuance of the same views, an effort was made by the popular party to expel the duke of York from the House of Peers, and even from court. The Commons entertained a motion for a test more comprehensive than that which had already received the sanction of Parliament, intending to enact that, whoever refused to take it should be declared incapable of holding a seat in either House, and even prohibited from approaching within five miles of the royal residence. While this proposal was undergoing due discussion, a different plan of securities had been devised by the Lords, namely, to disarm all Roman Catholics, to prevent the princes of the blood from marrying any but Protestants, and to provide that all the branches of the royal family, the eldest sons of Roman Catholic peers, and all the children of other Roman Catholics, if their parents were dead, should be educated in the Protestant faith. It was likewise moved that, to a prince of the blood, the penalty for marrying a lady who professed the religion of Rome should be the forfeiture of his right to the throne, should he happen to be in the line of succession. It is asserted in the Life of James, that when this new test was carried by vote in the Commons, "the duke's friends and the loyal party, out of regard to the blood royal, had interest enough, by a majority of only two votes, to have a proviso added of exception for the duke's person, which put the little earl of Shaftesbury so out of humour, that he was heard to say, he did not care what became of the bill."*

No sooner had Charles made peace with Holland, than it became manifest to the French king that the arms of England might possibly be employed against him. Hence he saw the necessity of securing the neutrality of his late ally, an object which

took offence at Buckingham and Arlington for appearing before the House of Commons, and made a standing order that thenceforth no peer should answer any charge in the House of Commons in person, by writing or by counsel, under the penalty of being committed to the Black Rod or the Tower during the pleasure of the House. Wallace, vol vii p 133

* Life of James II vol i. pp. 489, 490

could only be accomplished by supplying him with money, and thereby relieving him from his dependence on Parliament, the majority of whom were favourably inclined towards the Dutch. It is asserted that this crooked policy originated with the duke of York, who kept up a regular correspondence with Louis, and who could perceive no other method of protecting himself against the opposition, or of shielding his brother from the reproaches of the people. But whatever may have been the motive, it admits not of any doubt that, from this time, the English monarch condescended to become a pensioner of France, and to devote himself to her interests. The knowledge or even the suspicion of such a fact could not fail to incense the popular leaders, who, as some of them were discarded ministers, and acquainted with the intrigues of the court, were little likely to question the accuracy of the report which conveyed the royal venality to their ears. They therefore resolved that, so soon as the Houses should be permitted to assemble, decisive steps should be adopted for exposing the government, and bringing the principal members of the cabinet to condign punishment.*

The earl of Danby, who had received due information as to the designs of his enemies, resolved to anticipate them by making a forward movement on their ground. He had observed that zeal against popery was the chief source of their favour with the multitude, for which reason measures were taken not only to enforce with the greatest vigour the laws already passed for the discouragement of Roman Catholics, but also to enact others still more severe. A proclamation, meanwhile, was issued on the authority of the king in council, commanding that all natives who had orders in the Church of Rome should leave the realm in the course of six weeks, under pain of death, that every subject who attended mass, whether in the queen's chapel or in

* Wilkins, vol. iv p 595. Burnet, vol i p 258 Kennet, p. 801.

those of the foreign ambassadors, should suffer a year's imprisonment, and pay a fine of a hundred marks; and that if any papist should dare to enter the palaces of Whitehall or of St James', or any other place where the court might happen to be resident, he should, if a peer, be sent to the Tower, and if a commoner, be committed to an ordinary prison. The same document made known that all licences for separate places of worship had been cancelled, and that the laws against conventicles were to be acted upon to the full extent of the several penalties.

When Parliament assembled in April, 1675, the chancellor explained and defended the proclamation now described, in order to meet the objections of his friends, who had usually advocated the cause of toleration. It was soon observed that the Opposition, who had never ceased to declaim against popery, took little interest in the question of religion, and that, in proportion as the ministry showed a zeal for the exclusive establishment of Protestantism, their ardour gradually cooled. Leaving this topic, therefore, they proceeded to attack the government on points of general policy, and even went so far as to exhibit articles of impeachment against Danby, who was accused of abusing his official influence, squandering the royal treasure, and enriching his own family. But being unable to prove the allegations brought forward, they next addressed the king respecting the English regiments still in the French service, and as his answer was not satisfactory, a violent debate ensued. The House resolved itself into a committee to consider the reply, and even the expediency of a second address, both of which points were discussed with a degree of warmth which seemed to threaten the renewal of a civil war. Several members, not content with the utmost licence of expression, laid their hands on their swords, prepared to maintain their arguments at the hazard of life; but the Speaker with great firmness put an end to the altercation by resuming the chair, in defiance

of their menaces, and by commanding their attention to the ordinary business of the day. The "further address" appears to have been voted, though there is no evidence on record that it ever was presented to the king; the more resolute adherents of the Opposition being perhaps satisfied with their triumph in debate, and with the consciousness that they had thereby given some equivalent for the gratuities which they are accused of having accepted from the Dutch and Spanish ambassadors. But to whatever extent they may have sacrificed to their avarice or personal animosity, they did not neglect the interests of the people, nor the defence of national freedom. They brought in a bill, making it treason to levy money without consent of Parliament, another, to compel such members as accepted office under the crown to vacate their seats, and a third, to secure so far the liberty of the subject as to prevent any one from being committed to prison or sent beyond sea without a regular trial.

While these encroachments on the royal authority were gradually diminishing the practical influence of the king's name, an attempt was made in the House of Lords to establish a principle which might guard the throne against the assault of democracy. This object was meant to be accomplished by the enactment of a test enforcing non-resistance, and the oath proposed ran in the following words — "I do declare that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatever, to take up arms against the king; and that I do abhor that traitorous position of taking up arms, by his authority, against his person, or against those who are commissioned by him according to law, in time of rebellion or war, and acting in pursuance of such commission; and I do swear that I will not at any time endeavour the alteration of the Protestant religion now established by law in the Church of England; nor will I endeavour any alteration in the government, in church or state, as it is by law established." The penalty attached to the violation of this engagement was a fine of five

hundred pounds, and the incapacity of holding office in the name of his Majesty *

After a long debate the bill was passed by a majority in the lower House, and would probably have attained the authority of law, had not a quarrel between the Commons and the Peers, on the extent of appellate jurisdiction, rendered it necessary for his Majesty to put an end to the session. Hoping to find that a recess of four months had cooled the passions of the orators on either side, Charles called them together again in October; but he soon discovered that in this expectation he had relied too much on the soothing influence of time, and ascribed too little weight to the pertinacity of political rancour. The dispute respecting the privilege of appeal was revived with undiminished fury, and as the minister perceived that they were resolved to spend the time in fruitless harangues rather than in providing for the wants of the public service, he suggested to his royal master the expediency of a second prorogation. Nor were they permitted to meet again till February, 1677, when, owing to the long discontinuance of their meeting, doubts were raised by certain peers concerning the legality of the proceedings on which they were about to enter. An old law of Edward III had declared that Parliaments should be held once every year, or oftener if need be, and as the late prorogation had extended beyond twelve months, it appeared in the eyes of those individuals as equivalent to a dissolution. They forgot, or were unwilling to give any importance to the fact, that a more recent law, which repealed the triennial statute, had fixed that it was necessary to assemble Parliament only once in three years. The exercise of a little severity on the part of the crown brought the leaders of the faction to acknowledge their error, and to acquiesce in the opinion of the judges, who declared in favour of the practice adopted by the government †

At the time when Charles, by making a

* Parliamentary History, vol. iv. p. 714. Marvell, Growth of Popery, p. 510. Lords' Journal, vol. xii. p. 665. Burnet, vol. ii. p. 71.

† Parliamentary History, vol. iv. p. 816. North, Examen

treaty with the Dutch, had retired from all active share in the war, he offered his services to Louis in the character of a mediator. The Spaniards and Imperialists, whose interests were only remotely concerned, showed a disposition to listen to overtures of peace, but, on the other hand, neither the prince of Orange nor the French king felt any desire to sheathe the sword till the fortune of arms should have placed their affairs in a more favourable position. A congress met at Nimeguen in July, 1675, under the auspices of the English monarch, and the representatives from the several states appeared with their credentials, avowing the utmost readiness to treat, nevertheless, after eighteen months had elapsed, no basis could be established on which even the preliminary negotiation could proceed. Both sides longed to await the issue of each succeeding campaign, the one being desirous to recover, the other to retain, the towns and provinces which had been disputed by the contending armies, on their respective frontiers. Hence it was not till August, 1678, that the peace of Nimeguen was settled, suddenly and in anger, leaving the belligerents with arms in their hands and enmity in their hearts, and throwing a great accession of power into the possession of France, whose pretensions had already become formidable to the rest of Europe *

During the interval which passed between the peace with Holland and the termination of the war the English Parliament was the scene of much faction, intrigue, and cupidity. Without yielding belief too easily to party writers, it will be acknowledged by every one who peruses our annals for the period now indicated, that, while there stood forth a small band of sincere patriots, who discarded every other object but the good of their country, the greater number looked for their reward either to the court, which had offices and pensions to bestow, or to a less honourable quarter, whence pecuniary gratifications are said to have been dispensed. Louis could boast at once of buying the

* Temple, vol. ii. p. 461.

policy of the king and the voice of the Opposition Even the renowned Algernon Sidney disdained not to receive money from the French ambassador; and there are others, whose names and professed motives ought to have kept them above the reach of so despicable an influence, who are nevertheless subject to just suspicion *

The king was led, not less by inclination than by an imaginary advantage, to take part with France; and it may be urged as an apology for him, as well as for the other leaders of the Opposition, that they accepted bribes to follow a line of conduct which they were otherwise most disposed to pursue On the one hand, Charles always regarded his alliance with Louis as a sure resource in case of any commotions among his own subjects; and whatever schemes he might have entertained for enlarging his prerogative, or altering the established religion, it was from that quarter alone he could expect either countenance or aid On the other hand, he appears to have dreaded that his Parliament would in the end treat him as they had formerly used his father; and that, after they had engaged him in a continental war, they would take advantage of his necessities, and compel him to purchase supplies by sacrificing his authority and abandoning his ministers The people at large were earnest in their wishes that he should espouse the cause of Holland and her allies against the triumphant arms of France; and it was everywhere acknowledged that at several stages of the war he might have acted as the arbiter of Europe But it is not undeserving of notice that, whenever he manifested a determination to assist the Dutch, and urge the court of Paris to peace, the patriots in the House of Commons relaxed in their endeavours, and even refused to co-operate with him When he solicited money to enable him to

equip his navy and recruit his army, they insinuated an apprehension, which was only too well founded, that his ulterior designs were against the liberties of his subjects. For example, in 1677 they voted an address beseeching his Majesty to enter into a league, offensive and defensive, with the States-general of the United Provinces, against the growth and power of the French king, and for the preservation of the Spanish Netherlands, and yet in the beginning of the following year, when he seemed resolved to buckle on his armour, at the head of thirty thousand men, and a fleet of ninety sail, they instantly became cool, and started a variety of difficulties They did not hesitate to say that they considered such preparations as intended more against the independence of England than against the progress of the French monarch. Accordingly, instead of co-operating with the king during his short fit of activity, they appointed a day to inquire into the state of the nation with regard to religion, and having entered upon this subject, they proceeded so far as to vote that, however urgent the occasion, they would lay no further charge upon the people till secured against the prevalence of the Catholic party In short, it has been justly remarked by a philosophical historian, that the Parliament was impatient for war when the king seemed averse to it, and that they grew suspicious of some sinister design as soon as he complied with their requests, and appeared to enter into their measures *

The peace of Europe was at length accelerated by an event which, a short time afterwards, was attended with still more important consequences His Majesty could not fail to perceive that the affections of a large body of his people were directed towards the prince of Orange, both as the head of the confederacy which was employed in checking the ambition of Louis, and also as the chief representative of the Protestant interest in the southern division of the Continent To gratify the nation in this respect

* This subject is ably discussed by Hallam, vol. ii p. 587, and by Lord John Russell, in the Life of Lord William Russell. Hume, who alludes to the charge in a note, says, "Of these, Lord Russell and Lord Holles alone refused to touch any French money, all the others received presents or bribes from Barillon."

* Temple, *Memoirs*, vol. i p. 458. Hume, vol. viii p. 89.

he proposed a marriage between William and the eldest daughter of his brother, the Princess Mary, now the heir presumptive to the throne. The stadtholder, whose thoughts were immersed in politics and war, is said to have received the proposal with some degree of indifference, but a little consideration, joined to the advice of his friends in England, opened up to him the many advantages which such a union must necessarily confer upon the States-general, as well as on the house of Orange. The completion of this match, which gave great courage to the allies, convinced the king of France that he could no longer trifle with the repose of his neighbours. He had been kept in ignorance that such a measure was contemplated, his counsel had not been solicited, his ambassador was not admitted as a party, and he therefore concluded that the accession of England to the cause of the confederates would follow as the natural consequence. It soon appeared, indeed, that Charles, who still required his yearly benefaction, meant not to push matters at once to such an extremity; and though he immediately began to adjust with his nephew the terms of a general peace, he left to Louis all the chances which might arise from the success of his arms during another campaign. But in making this concession, he soon felt that he had placed a serious obstacle in the way which led to the completion of his avowed purpose, the restoration of tranquillity at home and abroad. The French, in the summer of 1678, made such formidable inroads on the territory of Holland and of the Spanish provinces, that great alarm was experienced at Amsterdam, and throughout the whole of Low Countries. To meet this changed aspect of affairs twenty thousand men were raised and encamped in the neighbourhood of London, and several regiments were sent to Ostend, under the duke of Monmouth, with the view of defending that important station. The envoys at Nimeguen now accelerated their motions, and at length a treaty was signed, which, though acceded to by the allies, gave an undue preponder-

ance to France, and thereby led, at no distant period, to the renewal of hostilities.*

When the return of peace to the nations, so long agitated by the ebbing and flowing tide of war, had imposed silence on the fiery orators of the House of Commons, who, if we may use the language of Courtin, only spoke more loudly that they might be bought at a higher price, the domestic repose of England began to be disturbed by rumours of plots for the overthrow of religion and the extinction of the Protestant succession. So early as 1675 an impostor appeared in London, under the assumed name of Luzancy, who professed to be a convert from the Church of Rome, and being permitted to read his abjuration in the pulpit of the Savoy, he was soon afterwards ordained a minister of the Anglican communion. To keep alive the interest which had been excited in his favour, he invented a story well calculated to gratify the popular taste, and to justify the fears of those who found themselves the victims of that epidemic alarm to which even persons of good sense were now periodically subject. He said that one day, while sitting in his lodgings, Father St Germain, who was described as confessor to the duchess of York, burst in suddenly upon him, and holding a dagger to his breast, compelled him, by the threat of instant death, to sign a recantation of his new principles, and promise to return to his native country. This important intelligence was communicated to the king by Lord Hollis; and the House of Commons was made acquainted with it through the medium of Lord Russell. A proclamation was therefore forthwith published for the apprehension of St Germain; the Peers took steps for the conversion of all monks and friars in foreign monasteries, and the lower House induced the lord chief justice to issue his warrant for the seizure of all Catholic priests, recommended Luzancy to the protection of his Majesty, and passed a bill for the exclusion

* Dalrymple, vol. ii. p. 112. The venality of both king and Parliament at this period is truly disgraceful.

of all Roman Catholics from Parliament and the presence of the royal family. But amidst this glow of favour and munificence, the early history and true character of the convert was made known, by means of a pamphlet written by a minister of the French Reformed church. It then appeared that this martyr to clerical bigotry had been compelled to flee from justice in his native province, where he had committed

the crime of forgery, and that he had succeeded in accomplishing a voyage to England, where he arrived equally destitute of wealth and of reputation. After this he was allowed to drop gradually into obscurity, but not until he was admitted Master of Arts at Oxford, and had obtained a living in Essex.*

* Commons' Journal, Nov. 8, 1675. Lords' Journal, vol. xii p. 21. Parliamentary History, vol. iv p. 780. Athen Oxon. vol. iv. Buinet, vol. ii p. 88.

CHAPTER XI—A.D. 1678–1685.

CHARLES II

POPISSH PLOT—NARRATIVE OF TITUS OATES—MURDER OF SIR E GODFREY—NEW TEST BILL BROUGHT IN AND PASSED—DUKE OF YORK EXEMPTED—THE QUEEN ACCUSED—FALL OF THE LORD TREASURER DANBY, AND DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT—CHARACTER OF THE LATE PARLIAMENT—AFFAIRS OF SCOTLAND—MURDER OF ARCHBISHOP SHARP—DEFEAT OF CLAVERHOUSE AT DRUMCLOG—BATTLE OF BOTHWELL BRIDGE—CRUELITIES PERPETRATED ON THE COVENANTERS—IMPEACHMENT OF LORD DANBY REVIVED—OPPOSITION OF PARLIAMENT TO HIS PARDON—DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT—THE COUNCIL OF THIRTY—NEW PARLIAMENT—BILL OF EXCLUSION PROJECTED—MEMBERS BRIBED—INFORMATIONS OF DANGERFIELD—PETITIONERS AND ABHORRERS—EXCLUSION BILL PROPOSED—REJECTED BY THE LORDS—A SEVERE REMONSTRANCE VOTED BY PARLIAMENT—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF LORD STAFFORD—VIOLENCE OF THE COMMONS—NEW PARLIAMENT MEETS AT OXFORD—CASE OF FITZHARRIS—HE IS TRIED AND EXECUTED—TRIAL OF SHAFTESBURY—EXECUTION OF ARCHBISHOP PLUNKET—FEARS OF A CIVIL WAR—ASCENDANCY OF THE ROYAL CAUSE—AFFAIRS OF SCOTLAND—SEVERITIES PRACTISED IN SCOTLAND—TEST PROPOSED BY THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT—CASE OF THE EARL OF ARGYLE—POWER OF THE CROWN—RYEHOUSE PLOT—ITS DISCOVERY—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF LORD RUSSELL—TRIAL AND DEATH OF ALGERNON SIDNEY—NATURE OF THE RYEHOUSE PLOT—EXECUTION OF HOLLOWAY AND SIR THOMAS ARMSTRONG—DANBY AND THE POPISSH LORDS SET FREE FROM THE TOWER—POLITICAL INTRIGUES IN THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD—MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS ANNE—FOREIGN AFFAIRS—CONDITION OF IRELAND AND SCOTLAND—ILLNESS AND DEATH OF THE KING—IS RECONCILED TO THE CHURCH OF ROME—CHARACTER OF HIS REIGN

At this period the whole country was thrown into a most violent commotion, by the alleged discovery of a great popish plot for the overthrow of the Protestant religion. The principal actor in this daring imposition on popular credulity, was the infamous Titus Oates. This person was the son of an Anabaptist preacher, but at the Restoration he conformed to the established church, and after studying at Cambridge, was admitted to holy orders. While officiating as a curate, he was twice convicted of perjury. He was afterwards a chaplain on board a man-of-war, but had been dismissed from that situation for scandalous behaviour. After this he led an infamous and vagabond life, was received into the Romish church in 1676, and had passed some time on the Continent in English colleges of the order

of Jesus. Among the residents in these Jesuit seminaries he had heard some foolish talk about the best means of re-establishing the Romish faith in England, and, from the hints given by these "cunning and politic men," he constructed the tale, which threw all England into a frenzy. The first step was taken by a person named Kirby, a tool of Oates, who on the 12th of August, 1678, accosted the king while he was walking in St James' Park, and warned him that his life was in danger. In an interview which took place the same night, he informed his Majesty that two individuals, Grove and Pickering, with Sir George Wakeman, the queen's physician, were engaged to put him to death; adding that a friend, from whom he had received the information, was ready to disclose all the particulars in writing.

The person here referred to was Dr Tonge, a man of very weak understanding, and entitled to rank either as a fool or a knave, but who had supplied himself with certain papers relating to a pretended conspiracy, which, he maintained, were thrust under his door, though he acknowledged his acquaintance with the name of the author Oates, the individual to whom he thus guardedly alluded, now came forward, and revealed the particulars of the plot at great length; but finding the king and his minister equally incredulous, he repaired, with Tonge and Kirkby, to Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, to make oath to the truth of his information. Previous to this official act, Tonge had informed the lord-treasurer that a packet of letters, written by Jesuits concerned in the conspiracy, was that night put into the post-office at Windsor, directed to Bedingfield, one of their order, and confessor to the duke of York. Danby carried this intelligence to his Majesty, but found that he was too late to intercept the letters, these had already reached the hands of the chaplain, who delivered them to his master as forgeries having some bad object which he could not comprehend. Charles appears to have been convinced of the imposture concocted by the unprincipled writers who had attempted to work upon his fears, and the stratagem might have been defeated at this early period, had not James, in order to clear his own character and that of his confessor, insisted that the packet transmitted to the latter should be laid before the council.*

The story told by Oates when allowed to appear before the cabinet ministers is familiar to every one. He affirmed that the Jesuits, acting under a commission from the pope, had planned the murder of the king, the burning of London, and the re-establishment of popery, under the duke of York, throughout all his dominions. He forgot not to add that himself was employed on missions, and intrusted with letters, respecting the plot, between Eng-

land, Spain, and France; that he had held several conferences on the subject with Father la Chaise, the confessor of Louis XIV, and with Don John of Austria, when resident at Madrid; and that he had seen counted out, in the presence of the latter, the gold with which Sir George Wakeman was to be bribed to poison the king. When asked whether he, in his capacity of agent for the Jeuits, could produce any written evidence in support of his statement, he replied that he should be furnished with the most ample documents, were the persons whom he had named to be instantly arrested. Fortunately for his credit, there were found in the possession of Coleman, an intriguing person who had recently become a convert to the Romish faith, and held the office of secretary to the duchess of York, some loose papers connected with a foreign correspondence he had carried on in 1675 and 1676. In writing to Father la Chaise, Coleman had proposed that Louis should furnish him and his friends with twenty thousand pounds, to be employed in England for purposes which would contribute greatly to the promotion of French interest and the cause of the true church. "Success," he added, "would give the greatest blow to the Protestant religion that it had received since its birth," reminding the old priest, to whom he confided his secret thoughts, that "they had a mighty work on their hands, no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that, perhaps, the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy, which had so long domineered over great part of the northern world." Coleman was immediately committed to prison, being suspected, not without some appearance of reason, of entertaining designs inconsistent with the duty of a subject.*

The circumstances now mentioned, though not necessarily connected with such a plot as Oates had undertaken to reveal, increased

* Dalrymple, vol. ii p. 199 Macpherson, vol. i. p. 82 Burnet, vol. ii p. 94 Memoirs in Life of James, vol. i. p. 588.

* Life of James II., vol. i p. 318

the alarm to which his machinations had given rise, and threw an air of probability over his statements. Another incident tended still further to deepen the impression Sir Edmonsbury Godfrey, before whom the depositions had been made on oath, was a short time afterwards found dead near Primrose hill, and a coroner's inquest declared that he had been murdered. The Roman Catholics, as usual, were suspected of this horrid crime; and hence the fears of the populace, who anticipated a general massacre and the conflagration of the city, knew no bounds. Parliament, which met on the 21st October, soon made manifest that their leading members were not above the reach of the frenzy which had seized the public mind. The Opposition, more especially, under the direction of Shaftesbury, took a deep interest in the investigation of the conspiracy, being however, it was alleged, more desirous to spread a groundless alarm than to discover the truth. Oates, emboldened by such patronage, accused several noblemen of being parties to the plot, and even of having received commissions from the new government, which was expected to emerge from the ruins of the constitution under a Catholic sovereign. Accordingly the earl of Powis, Viscount Stafford, the Lords Petre, Arundel, and Belasis were thrown into prison as the chief actors at whose instance the whole treasonable scheme had been concerted *

Following the impulse which they received out of doors, the members of both Houses voted, "that there had been and still was a damnable and hellish plot contrived and carried on by the popish recusants for assassinating and murdering the king, and for subverting the government, and rooting out and destroying the Protestant religion." Originating in the same feelings, a bill was brought into the House of Commons, in which it was proposed to enact, that no person should presume to sit or vote in either House of Parliament,

or name a proxy to vote for him in the House of Lords, unless he had previously, in the presence of the House, taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and subscribed the declaration against transubstantiation. The penalties in this case were those which had been proposed on former occasions, but which the lenity of the Protestant members, or the influence of the crown, prevented from acquiring the sanction of law; namely, a fine of five hundred pounds, joined to the disability to sue in any court of law or equity, to receive any legacy or deed of gift, or to act in any manner as guardian, executor, or administrator. It was not disguised that the duke was the main object of all these attacks; and the next step taken by the popular leaders was to move an address in both Houses, that his royal highness should be removed from the presence and councils of the sovereign. They did not indeed accuse him of any direct participation in the plot; and Oates himself, when examined at the bar of the Peers, declared his belief in James' innocence. The charge of treason was therefore abandoned; but they contended that the influence of the duke at court encouraged the papists to persevere in their dangerous measures, while he proved an insuperable obstacle to those arrangements which were requisite for the security of Protestantism. The king was greatly incensed at Shaftesbury and Lord William Russell, who pressed the motion in their respective Houses, but his love of ease soon overcame his resentment, and he entreated his brother to resign his place as a privy councillor, and thereby disarm the fury of his persecutors. It was not without a severe struggle that the duke acceded to this recommendation; and in complying with the royal will in a matter so deeply affecting his personal consequence, he probably hoped to avert from the Roman Catholics the doom meditated against them by the Test bill still before Parliament. If this purpose constituted one of his motives in that act of self-denial, he must have experienced a painful disappointment,

* *Lords' Journals*, pp 299-327. *Journals of Commons*, Oct. 23, 24, 1678

for, contrary to the expectation of those nearest the seat of government, the bill passed with little opposition, but containing a clause which exempted the heir to the throne from its operation. Charles, when giving his assent to this statute, which deprived a large class among his subjects of their rights and privileges, stated distinctly that his voice was opposed at once to his judgment and his feelings, and that he made this sacrifice to the necessity of circumstances, in deference to the opinion of faithful counsellors, and from a regard to the safety of his kingdom.*

Having failed in their attempts against the duke of York, the partizans of Shaftesbury next directed their intrigues against the queen, whom they resolved to impeach as an agent in the plot, and consequently as chargeable with the great crime of high treason. To the honour of his Majesty this diabolical conspiracy was defeated, but not before Oates had presented himself in the House of Commons as a public accuser, and induced the members to vote an address for her removal from the royal household. The Peers, refusing to concur in this cruel persecution, appointed a committee to state the reasons of their refusal, which bore very distinctly on the inadmissible nature of the evidence laid before the council. Hence the popular leaders found it necessary to rest satisfied in the mean time with the prosecution of the Roman Catholic lords, formerly sent to the Tower, and with the trials of those inferior personages whom the authors of the plot had denounced as the original conspirators. Coleman and several others were visited with the severest penalty of law, on evidence which is

now every where condemned as false and suborned.*

Without attempting to fix the guilt of this miserable plot on any party or individual immersed in the politics of the time, we proceed to give an outline of the circumstances which brought to a close the administration of the earl of Danby, and the existence of a Parliament which had lasted seventeen years. This was brought about by the French court, which, knowing the lord-treasurer, artfully contrived to ruin him by making him pass for its friend. Ralph Montague, a faithless and shameless man, was at this time the English minister at Paris, and was bitterly hostile to Danby. At the instigation of the French king, he revealed to the Opposition a letter written by the earl, in the name of his master the king, to Louis XIV, soliciting, as the reward of his services in attempting to bring about a general peace, the payment of six hundred thousand livres in the course of three years. As the terms of the treaty were not accepted, the gratuity was not earned, and the request of Charles was not complied with, but so far as the crime and shame of so base a transaction were to be considered, the conduct of the minister was exposed to just condemnation. Danby's letter was produced in the House of Commons, which, with some others on the same subject, was voted a sufficient ground for impeaching him. He was accused of traitorously arrogating to himself regal power, by treating of peace and war without consulting the remaining members of the council; of keeping up an army to subvert the government; of being popishly affected, and traitorously concealing the horrid plot; of wasting the king's treasure, and of procuring for his own use gifts and grants contrary to law. In the month of December he was heard in his own defence at the bar of the Peers, when his eloquence, and the proofs he adduced of his integrity, made so favourable an impression, that a motion

* The Peers whom this Act deprived of their seats in the House were the duke of Norfolk, the earls of Shrewsbury, Berkshire, Portland, Cardigan and Powis, the Viscounts Montague and Stafford, the Lords Mowbray, Audley, Stourton, Petre, Arundel, Hunsdon, Belasis, Langdale, Teynham, Carrington, Widdrington, Gerard of Bromley, and Clifford. Several persons who assisted in the escape of the king after the battle of Worcester were exempted from the effects of the Test bill, and were allowed to live as freely as any of his Majesty's Protestant subjects, without being liable to the penalties against popish recusants. *Lords' Journal*, vol. xiii. p. 408. *Parliamentary History*, vol. iv. p. 1089.

* *Lords' Journals*, vol. xiii. pp. 385, 392, 408. *State Trials*, vol. x. p. 1275.

for sending him to the Tower was negatived by a large majority. All further proceedings in the cause were quashed by his Majesty, who, on the 30th of the same month, prorogued both Houses, preparatory to their dissolution towards the end of January ensuing.*

This House of Commons, relieved in the manner now described from their lengthened duties, have been praised or loaded with reprobation according to the particular principles of the historians by whom their proceedings are recorded. Till the painful disclosures brought to light by Sir John Dalrymple from the correspondence of Barillon, the French ambassador, were placed before the public eye, the leading patriots were esteemed not only pure, but entirely incorruptible; their vehement harangues against despotism and cupidity were ascribed to their love of country and their veneration for the institutions of a free people, and no one was so uncharitable as to imagine that the same men who denounced the government for subserviency to France, were themselves bribed by the agents of that ambitious monarchy. There is, it has been remarked, something alike instructive and revolting in the conduct of the Opposition leaders. With the names of religion and liberty on their lips, not a few of them were actuated only by selfish passions. Lord Russell himself took part in the intrigue with Barillon, and in that of Montague against Danby; but he kept his hand pure from the gold lavished by the former, and when Rouvigny, the envoy, asked his aid in the distribution of French bribes, he said he should be sorry to act with men who could be gained by money. Among the pensioners whose names are found in the list handed down by Barillon stands that of Algernon Sidney, for five hundred guineas at one time; a supply which he deemed it not unworthy of his patriotic principles to take from the hand of a foreign monarch, because his object was to defend

the constitution and the liberties of the people against the attacks of the court.* In one respect, however, this Parliament has a right to claim public approbation. It introduced and rendered familiar to the practice of our national administration the working of a regular Opposition; one of the most effectual means that could be devised for securing the adoption of wise measures, and for perpetuating the principles of constitutional liberty. The party of whom it was composed consisted originally of the presbyterian remnant of the Cromwellian period, by this time called Whigs, recruited with country gentlemen, who contributed simple minds and silent votes; some few men, like Lord Russell, conspicuous for their public virtue and love of freedom, and a small body of republicans, the growth of the Commonwealth, with Sidney at their head†

In Scotland, which was still governed like a conquered province writhing under a foreign yoke, the zeal of the privy council contrived to display itself in efforts to produce conformity to the episcopal church, while the ingenuity of the Covenanters was displayed in evading the unjust and arbitrary laws under which they groaned. Other means having failed, recourse was now had by the government to an obsolete mode of oppression, termed "letters of intercommuning," by which persons were outlawed in absence, and all who held intercourse with them were subjected to the same penalty. Even their nearest relations were forbidden to "furnish them with meat, drink, house, harbour, victuals, or any other thing useful or comfortable to them, by

* For a confirmation of the facts alluded to in the text, see Dalrymple's second volume of *Memoirs*, which contains numerous extracts from the *Correspondence of Barillon*, and vol. vii. of Wallis' *History of England*, p. 226.

† "It would be unjust to impute to these men the extreme wretchedness of taking tribes to injure their country. On the contrary, they meant to serve her, but it is impossible to deny that they were mean and indelicate enough to let a foreign prince pay them for serving her. Among those who cannot be acquitted of this charge was one man, who is popularly considered as the personification of public spirit, and who, in spite of some great moral and intellectual faults, has a just claim to be called a hero, a philosopher, and a patriot."—Macaulay.

* *Parliamentary History*, vol. iv. p. 4078. Danby, *Letters* 9, 10.

word, writ, or message, or any other manner of way." Numbers were imprisoned in a small, damp, dismal dungeon on the Bass Rock, and left there, neglected and forgotten for years, to pine in want and wretchedness; and some were even sold as recruits for the French service *

Archbishop Sharp was generally regarded as either the author or instigator of the most cruel and oppressive measures against the Covenanters. Ten years before this (July, 1668), he had been fired at in the High Street of Edinburgh, but the ball missed him, and wounded the bishop of Orkney, who was in his company. In March, 1674, the primate happening to notice a man who was watching him, caused him to be arrested and examined. He proved to be a fanatical preacher of the name of Mitchell, who had been involved in the Pentland insurrection, and had in consequence been compelled to take refuge on the Continent. Sharp imagined that he recognized in this man the features of the assassin who had formerly attempted his life, and urged him to confess his guilt, and to make a full disclosure of his accomplices. Mitchell, however, knowing with whom he had to deal, refused to make any acknowledgment unless he received an official assurance of pardon. At length, in the words of the Minutes of Council, "upon assurance given him by one of the committee as to his life, who had warrend from the lord commissioner and council to give the same, he did thereafter freely confess before all the lords that were on the said committee that he shott the said pistoll at the said archbishop." The promise of life was at first kept, but Mitchell was sent to prison, and remained there two years loaded with irons. The council were under the impression that there had been an extensive plot against the primate; but Mitchell persisted in affirming that he had no accomplices. In 1676 he was again brought before the council, and shockingly tortured to induce him to make further confessions,

* *Barnet*, vol. ii. pp. 111, 118, 156.

but he resolutely adhered to his declaration that he had nothing more to say. He remained two years longer in the Bass prison; but at length, in 1678, he was brought to trial at the instigation of Sharp, for the attempt on his life ten years previously. A garbled extract of this Minute of Council, containing his confession, was produced as evidence against the criminal, but the request of his counsel, the eminent lawyer George Lockhart, that the original record should be laid before the court was peremptorily refused by Lauderdale. A copy of the Act of Council containing the promise of pardon was produced by Lockhart, but four of the members of council, Rothes, Hatton, Lauderdale, and Sharp, solemnly denied on oath that any promise of life had been given to the prisoner. Mitchell was therefore found guilty and condemned to death. In these circumstances, Lauderdale, who was not quite shameless, would have granted him a respite, but Sharp insisted that the sentence should be carried into effect, and Mitchell was accordingly executed in the Grass Market of Edinburgh. "The execution of Mitchell" says Lord Fountainhall, "made a wonderful noise in the country, and satires and bitter verses immediately flew abroad like hornets in great swarms, speaking much acrimony and almost universal discontent" *.

The next step taken by the government was to call upon the gentry throughout the western counties to enter into bonds that their families, domestics, tenants, and all persons residing on their estates, should not withdraw from their parish churches, or attend conventicles, or succour field preachers, or persons "intercommuned," under the same penalties which the delinquents themselves incurred. It was strongly suspected that the object of these proceedings was to excite a revolt among the Scottish Presbyterians, for the purpose of affording the king a pretext for keeping on foot a powerful army, which would suppress the English constitution. On the refusal of the gentry

* *Historical Notices of Scottish affairs.*

to enter into these illegal bonds, Lauderdale declared the western districts in a state of siege; and by the express command of the king English forces were ordered to march to the Borders, a body of Irish troops were sent to the opposite coast, and eight thousand Highlanders were brought down from the hills, and quartered upon the inhabitants of the western counties. "The obnoxious counties" says a historian very friendly to the Stewarts, "were the most populous and the most industrious in Scotland. The Highlanders were the people the most disorderly, and the least civilized. It is easy to imagine the havoc and the destruction which ensued. A multitude not accustomed to discipline, averse to the restraint of laws, trained up in rapine and violence, were let loose amidst those whom they were taught to regard as enemies to their prince and to their religion. Nothing escaped their ravenous hands by menaces, by violence, and sometimes by tortures, men were obliged to discover their concealed wealth. Neither age nor sex, nor innocence, afforded protection.* There was no security for either life or property. The cultivation of the soil was entirely neglected, and the most fertile districts in Scotland were converted into a wilderness. When Lauderdale was informed of these ravages he exclaimed, "Better that the west bore nothing but windlestraws and sandlaverocks† than that it should bear rebels to the king."

In spite of these oppressive measures the gentry of the western counties still persisted in their refusal to sign the bonds, and Lauderdale, in savage fury at the failure of his efforts, at a meeting of the council board bared his arms above the elbows, and swore a solemn oath that he would compel them to subscribe. A strange and absurd expedient to enforce submission was suggested by Sir George Mackenzie, afterwards king's advocate. According to the Scotch law, any person who dreads violence from another may obtain what is called *law-burrows*, com-

pellling the offender to give security for his good behaviour; and from some supposed analogy between this case and that of a sovereign jealous of his people, the notable expedient was adopted of causing the king to take out a general writ of *law-burrows* against the whole Scottish nation. Accordingly, a bond of the peace was drawn out, by which the subscribers became bound under heavy penalties, neither to frequent conventicles themselves, nor to allow their families and tenants to be present at such unlawful assemblies. The object of the council in framing such measures was evidently to goad the people into insurrection; and on hearing a rumour, which proved to be false, that a rising had taken place, Lauderdale and his associates were unable to conceal their satisfaction. "On Valentine's day," says Burnet, "instead of drawing mistresses they drew estates, and great joy appeared in their looks upon a false alarm that was brought them of an insurrection." They even sought to prevent the sufferers from appealing to the throne, slight as must have been their hope of relief from that quarter, and all noblemen and gentlemen were forbidden, under severe penalties, to leave Scotland without the permission of the council. But in spite of this stringent prohibition fourteen peers and fifty gentlemen, with the duke of Hamilton at their head, went up to London and laid their complaints before the king in council. Lauderdale, however, was defended both by the duke of York and the lord treasurer, the earl of Danby; and Charles himself, at the close of the discussion, is reported to have said, "I perceive that Lauderdale has been guilty of many bad things against the people of Scotland, but I cannot find that he has acted anything contrary to my interest."

The continued and cruel persecution of the Scottish Presbyterians, which was largely imputed to Archbishop Sharp, deepened the popular hatred of that prelate, and led to an act of savage vengeance, for which the great body of the Covenanters were in no way responsible. Some acts of local oppression

* Hume's History of England, chap. 66

† Dog's grass and sand-larks.

had roused the indignation of the nonconformists in Fife; and a band of them, headed by David Hackston, a landed proprietor, and his brother-in-law, the celebrated John Balfour of Burley, waylaid a worthless fellow named Carmichael, who had been the principal agent of Sharp in these persecutions. This person, however, had been forewarned of his danger, and contrived to escape. Disappointed in their attempt to wreak their vengeance on the instrument of so much suffering, they were about to separate, when they were informed that the archbishop himself was approaching, on his return from Edinburgh to St Andrews. In their fanatical state of mind they regarded this incident as a divine call to "execute that justice which the law denied them" against the Judas of that day. "It was immediately suggested," says one of them, "that albeit we had missed the man we sought for, yet God had by a wonderful providence delivered the great and capital enemy of his church into our hands, and that it was a visible call to us from heaven not to let him escape." They accordingly pursued and overtook the archbishop upon Magus Moor, about three miles from St Andrews, and murdered him with circumstances of shocking barbarity. The perpetrators of this cruel and bloody deed were actuated solely by their own fanaticism and desire of revenge, but their crime was nevertheless imputed to the whole presbyterian party, and was made the pretext for inflicting additional severities on the Covenanters. It was declared an act of high treason to attend a field conventicle, and the military officers in the west were invested with unlimited authority, and received strict orders to search out and disperse all such meetings at the point of the sword. Hackston, Balfour, and their accomplices, had made their escape to the west, and secretly joined a small body there who had taken up arms for their own protection. On the 29th of May, the anniversary of the Restoration, they burned in the marketplace of Rutherglen, near Glasgow, all the Acts of the Scottish Parliament against

Presbyterianism and in favour of Prelacy. Alarmed and enraged at this proceeding, the council despatched to the west a body of troops, commanded by the notorious John Graham of Claverhouse, with a commission to put to death all who were found in arms. Having received intelligence that a great field meeting was to be held on the 1st of June, 1679, at a place called Drumclog, near Loudon Hill, on the eastern border of Ayrshire, Claverhouse marched to disperse it. But the Covenanters, who were armed, and had two or three old soldiers at their head, took up an advantageous position on the slope of an eminence, covered in front by a morass and a deep ditch, and boldly waited the attack of the enemy. After a brief but fierce struggle the dragoons were put to flight, leaving forty of their number dead on the field. Their commander had his horse shot under him, and narrowly escaped.

This victory gave the Covenanters possession of Glasgow and of the west country, and attracted great numbers to their standard. In a short time their ranks had swelled to six thousand men, among whom were eighteen of the intercommuned clergy, and a number of the west country gentry. But they had no proper leader; and instead of taking active and energetic measures to unite their friends in offering a combined resistance to their common enemy, they wasted their time in bitter disputes respecting the propriety of admitting into their ranks any who had accepted the indulgence from the government.

Meanwhile, the intelligence of this rising had reached London, and the duke of Monmouth, the king's natural son, was sent down with all speed, accompanied by a small body of English cavalry, and having joined to them the Scottish Guards, and some regiments of militia, amounting in all to about ten thousand men, he marched against the insurgents, who had taken up a strong position on the banks of the Clyde, near the village of Bothwell. The river was crossed at this spot by a steep and narrow bridge, which was held by a strong party under Hackston,

and if properly supported might have been made good against a very superior force. But the great body of the insurgents were even at this critical moment engaged in a fierce dispute respecting the old theme, "the black indulgence," and presented the appearance of a mere disorderly mob, who, as Bishop Burnet remarks, "had neither the grace to submit, the courage to fight, nor the sense to run away." They were attacked by the royal troops on the 22nd of June; and though Hackston maintained his post at the bridge with courage and constancy, and drove back column after column of the enemy with great loss, he was in the end obliged to give way, in consequence of the failure of his ammunition. The royal army then crossed the bridge, and formed in line of battle on the southern bank. At the first discharge of their cannon the untrained horse of the insurgents wheeled and rode off, breaking the ranks of their own infantry in their flight, and the whole army was instantly put to rout. Claverhouse made great slaughter among the the unresisting fugitives. About four hundred fell in the battle and in the pursuit, and about twelve hundred of the infantry threw down their arms and surrendered at discretion. Monmouth, who had generously exerted himself to stop the effusion of blood, succeeded in obtaining from the king an Act of indemnity for the insurgents. But Lauderdale contrived, by various expedients, in a great measure to defeat his object. Two ministers, King and Kidd, whom Claverhouse had arrested on his way to Drumclog, and whom the Covenanters rescued, were recaptured; and though they had taken no part in the insurrection, but, on the contrary, had urged the insurgents to lay down their arms, they were cruelly tortured with the boots, and then executed. Four of the common prisoners were put to death and their bodies hung in chains on Magus Moor, though none of them were implicated in the murder of the archbishop. The rest of the prisoners, about twelve hundred in number, were confined in the Greyfriars'

Churchyard of Edinburgh, remaining there for five months, with no covering to shelter them from the weather, and often treated with great brutality by their guards. Some of them died from the effects of cold and ill-usage; a few made their escape; a considerable number were ultimately released on signing a bond that they would never again take up arms against the king; the remainder, amounting to two hundred and fifty-seven, were condemned to be sold as slaves in the island of Barbadoes. But they were shipwrecked on the coast of Orkney, and the greater part of them lost through the shameful conduct of the captain, who was a Roman Catholic, and treated them with great brutality during the voyage. When the ship struck he caused the hatches to be shut upon the prisoners, two hundred of whom were drowned; the remainder made their escape through a hole in the deck which one of the sailors, in spite of the captain's orders, opened with an axe. Their sentence, however, was still carried out, and they were sold as slaves to the plantations in Jamaica and New Jersey.

Returning to the affairs of England—the temper in which the last Parliament separated was inherited to the fullest extent by its successor. So determined were the new members in their resolution to weaken the influence of the crown, that they rejected the Speaker recommended by the court, and compelled the duke of York to retire to the Continent. They revived at once the impeachment of Lord Danby, though protected by a royal pardon, and adopted measures for prosecuting the Roman Catholic peers in the Tower, who had not yet been brought to trial. Having had their resentment gratified by the capital punishment of several Jesuits who had fallen under suspicion, they permitted the worthless informers, upon whose evidence so many had already been condemned, to assail the life of Sir George Wakeman, the queen's physician, whom they accused of an intention to poison the king. But in this attempt

their arts were found unavailing. The public, who sympathized with her Majesty under the neglect to which she had been long exposed, saw clearly that the condemnation of her confidential medical adviser might be used as a ground for charging herself with the guilt of treason; and on this account, perhaps, more than from the love of justice, Sir George had the rare fortune to obtain an acquittal.

Danby, who had in vain looked to the Peers for that dispassionate inquiry into his case which the Commons were now incapable of exercising, found it necessary to yield himself a prisoner, and was committed to prison. The king, both on his own account and that of the earl, was extremely desirous that the pardon he had conferred upon his treasurer should be held so far valid as to shield him from the high penalties with which he was threatened, and employed his whole interest in both Houses to accomplish his object. The Lords appointed a day for the examination of the delicate question—How far a servant of the crown, exposed to the suspicion of the supreme court of the nation, could be screened by the formal remission of the sovereign? The lower House, who considered such an inquiry as a violation of their privileges, expressed their judgment in a deliberate vote, that whoever should presume without their leave to maintain before their lordships the validity of Danby's pardon, should be accounted a betrayer of the liberties of Parliament. They next objected to the bishops having a seat in the House, both on the trial of the earl, and also when this preliminary point should be discussed—an encroachment on the rights of the Peerage to which the majority of their number firmly refused to submit. Having no confidence in their moderation, and apprehensive of measures still more violent, the king, in the month of July, 1679, put an end to their sitting by a dissolution.

The disgrace of Danby, which deprived Charles of a minister, suggested to him the expediency of governing by a council,

which would at once divide the responsibility, and add to the strength of the cabinet. This idea is said to have originated with Sir William Temple, who, too honest and upright to enjoy a large share of the royal confidence, was highly valued on account of his experience, his reputation as a diplomatist, and the influence which he still possessed with the moderate party in both Houses. The new council was to consist of thirty members, one half of whom were to be selected by his Majesty from the officers of his court and government, and the other to be chosen from the ranks of the Opposition. If an opinion of the influence of this body were to be formed from their income alone, the estimate would necessarily be high, for their annual revenue arising from landed property was calculated at three hundred thousand pounds. The Peers were Shaftesbury, Halifax, Winchester, Worcester, Falconbridge, Robarts, and Hollis; and the Commons were Lords Russell and Cavendish, Sir Henry Capel, Seymour, and Powle.

Though this instrument of government was little in harmony with the principles of the constitution, the people nevertheless were greatly delighted with the concession which it seemed to imply towards their sentiments. It was no longer doubted that the measures of the court would be shaped agreeably to the spirit of patriotic and Protestant zeal with which the council was imbued. But before any public act had given token of the policy which was to be pursued, the suspicions of the nation returned; the credit of the administration gradually waned; and the truth of the old maxim was soon realized to its fullest extent, that "there is no wearing the court and country livery together." The members were divided into two parties, the one headed by Shaftesbury, the other by Sunderland, Halifax, and Essex, usually called the triumvirate; the former being able to command a majority at their own board, while the latter more than counterbalanced their power by the predominance of votes

in the House of Commons. A new Parliament had in the mean time been elected; but as popular favour had more influence on the returns than the wishes of the sovereign, the greater number were found to belong to the ranks of his opponents. Hence his reluctance to call them together; and in the hope that a little time would moderate their fears of popery, and soothe their angry passions, he resolved on his own authority to postpone the period of their assembling.

Shaftesbury, though a member of the council, had used the power connected with his station to exclude the duke of York from the succession. The bill for that purpose had even passed the lower House, and spread consternation into the royal family; and, in carrying this measure, the earl is accused of having falsely represented to the members that the king viewed with a favourable eye the pretensions of his son, the duke of Monmouth, and wanted only a good excuse for paving his way to the throne. James, naturally apprehensive that the yielding temper of his brother might be seduced into compliance with the schemes of an ambitious demagogue, requested permission to leave his exile at Brussels, and return to England; a favour which was not yielded until his Majesty was seized with an alarming illness at Windsor castle. This visit, which revived the affection of Charles, and perhaps opened his eyes to the dangerous plans of the Opposition, led to the retirement of Monmouth, and to the dismissal of Shaftesbury. Lord Robarts, afterwards earl of Radnor, was raised to the presidency of the council.

The spirit of party, though subdued by the temporary resolution of the king, did not yet cease from troubling the government; and, what was most disgraceful to the character of the country, both the royalists and their antagonists maintained an intercourse with Louis, either with the view of filling their purses or of gratifying their resentment. Even the republicans, whose views certainly exceeded the bounds pre-

scribed by the French court, likewise met with encouragement. Sidney, who refused not the gold offered by Barillon, was an avowed enemy to monarchical rule; and the wily ambassador did not shut his eyes to the probability that, under the auspices of a young man so plausible and popular, the crown of England might be shaken from the head of its owner. He sagely remarked that, in troublous times, it was not the best regulated minds which produced the most striking effects. The popish plot was now beginning to lose its terrors, and consequently its usefulness, as a political engine; but as the credulity of the public seemed still unexhausted, an attempt was made by an unprincipled fellow named Dangerfield to secure attention for a new imposture, founded on similar grounds. A benevolent woman, Mrs Collier, who was in the habit of visiting prisons, found him confined for debt, after having been convicted of several felonies. She recommended him to the notice of Lady Powis, who, after aiding his conversion to the Church of Rome, mentioned his name to the king as being privy to a plot contrived by the Presbyterians against his government and life. He denounced Colonel Mansel as the head of the conspiracy, and gave directions in what part of that gentleman's house a treasonable paper would be found in proof of the charge now brought against him. The colonel soon succeeded in establishing his innocence; and as it was at the same time made manifest that the accuser had placed the suspicious document there with his own hand, he was forthwith committed to prison. Disappointed in his first attempt, Dangerfield imagined his success would be greater if he diverted the charge from the Protestant nonconformists to the Roman Catholics. He accordingly asserted that it was at the suggestion of the two ladies who had protected him that he had fabricated the plot against the Presbyterians, to enable themselves to proceed more securely with one which was really meant to accomplish a revolution in church and state. To substantiate his nar-

native, he referred to a certain meal-tub in the house of Mrs. Collier, wherein were various letters and papers connected with the designs of the principal traitors. In this instance, as in the former, no doubt was entertained that they were deposited by himself when arranging the several parts of his plot. The mistress of the house was acquitted, after undergoing a trial at the Old Bailey; the abortive effort to rekindle an expiring flame was treated with contempt; and all men were satisfied that, though both factions were too ready to listen to the statements of the informer, neither had called him into their employment. Lady Powis had been committed to the Tower; but as the grand jury of Middlesex ignored the bill brought against her, she escaped the ignominy and danger of a public trial.*

It having been ascertained that the result of the late elections was unfavourable to the court, the king did not call the two Houses together till the month of October, 1680, and it soon appeared that the anger which had been so long pent up in the breasts of the popular leaders, was only rendered more intense from the restraint to which it had been subjected. During the prorogation many causes of personal enmity had arisen between the two parties, more especially in connection with a system of petitioning countenanced by Shaftesbury, and which was meant to importune his Majesty to assemble Parliament. The excess to which this device was carried created a reaction among the more loyal of the people, who, expressing their detestation of an expedient which they regarded as contemptible and vexatious, were stigmatized with the name of Abhorrrers. The Commons had no sooner

met than they gave vent to their rage against this class of opponents; they appointed a committee to inquire whether any of their own body had been guilty of the crime of "abhorring;" they voted an impeachment against the chief justice of the Common Pleas for drawing the proclamation against tumultuous petitions; and great numbers in all parts of England were seized by order of the lower House alone, and committed to custody for no higher offence than that of uttering their dislike of such an attempt at intimidation. But at length, when it became obvious that personal liberty was about to be sacrificed at the shrine of faction, the country rose against the violence of their representatives, and compelled them to desist from the exercise of a prerogative more alarming and undefined than any of the attributes of sovereignty. Checked in this particular, they returned to the popish plot, the reality of which, in all its "damnable and hellish purposes," they still boldly asserted; extending also their bounty and protection to the whole tribe of informers to whom it owed its existence.

But the principal object contemplated by Shaftesbury and his followers was the exclusion of the duke of York from the throne: a consummation on which they had formerly exhausted all their strength, and it was again to be attempted under the more favourable circumstances produced by the late convictions in the courts of law. As it was resolved to introduce the bill in the House of Commons, the leaders took especial care that the fears and indignation of the members should be revived by a repetition of the evidence on which the Jesuits had suffered death, and the popish lords were committed to the Tower. For this purpose Dangerfield was summoned to the bar, where he solemnly affirmed that his royal highness had been privy to the imposture of a presbyterian plot; had given him instructions to forge the commissions; had made him a promise of twenty guineas, with the assurance of a more ample reward; had laughed at his scruple of shedding the king's blood; and

* State Trials, vol. vii. pp. 1188-1218. Mrs. Collier, in reply to Dangerfield's Narrative, published a vindication of herself, entitled, *Malice Defeated, or, a brief Relation of the Accusation and Deliverance of Elizabeth Collier*. The chief authorities on the Meal-tub Plot are North, *Notes on Dangerfield's Particular Narrative*; Dangerfield, *Answer to a certain Scandalous, Lying Pamphlet entitled Malice Defeated*; Collier's rejoinder, *The Matchless Rogue*, the *Lords' Journals*, xlii. p. 667, *Castlemaine's Manifesto*, 1681, and *State Trials*, vol. vii. pp. 1048-1112, Lingard, vol. xlii. p. 204.

had commanded him to persevere without dread of the consequences. Such details were well calculated to excite a deep emotion; and before there was time for it to subside, Lord Russell moved that it should be the first care of the House "effectually to suppress popery, and prevent a popish successor." The bill itself was immediately ordered, and after a warm discussion, in which all the wonted arguments were repeated, it was passed by the acclamations of a large majority.*

To prevent the meditated sentence of disability from being carried into effect against his brother, the king had sent a message to the House, professing his readiness to concur with them in any measure for the protection of the Protestant faith which should not affect the inheritance of the crown. But as this proposal received no attention from them, his Majesty resolved to exert what influence still remained to him amongst the Peers, many of whom had already been tampered with by the zealous partizans of Monmouth. Lord Russell was named to carry up the bill to their Lordships' House; and when the title, "To disable James Duke of York from succeeding to the crown," was read, a shout of approbation was heard to arise from behind the bar. But this note of triumph did not express the general sentiment of that august assembly; for when, after a powerful display of eloquence on both sides, the question was put to the vote, the majority in favour of government was not less than thirty-three. The rage of Shaftesbury and his adherents knew no bounds. To punish Lord Halifax, by whose exertions the Exclusion bill was lost, the Commons presented an address that he might be removed for ever from the royal presence and councils; and similar ebullitions of resentment were directed against the more active members of their

own House, who had ventured to oppose a motion by which they had hoped to divert the legitimate descent of the imperial sceptre. The sole remaining chance for securing liberty and religion was, they asserted, the marriage of the king with a Protestant princess; preparatory to which they were ready to introduce a bill to enable him to dissolve his union with Catherine. To this expedient Charles entertained an insuperable objection, founded on his respect for the character of the queen, and perhaps some mixture of shame for his ill-treatment of her, and he returned an answer similar to the one which a like proposal had on a former occasion drawn from his lips, that he would never consent to the disgrace of an unoffending woman*.

In the present humour of the Commons, no hope could attend any application to them for money. When the king represented the deplorable state of his finances, and urged the necessity of supplies to enable him to replace Tangier in a condition to defend itself; instead of a grant, they voted a very angry address, full of complaint and expostulation, setting forth all the errors of his government, and intimating their conviction that the intrigues of the Roman Catholics had not taken place altogether without his countenance. Their jealousy of the duke of York, whose principles were extremely bigoted, might admit of an apology, because, while it was perfectly consistent with the spirit of the age, it pointed to the most important interests that can awaken the vigilance of a patriot. In taking a view of the history of Europe during the seventeenth century, an excuse has been suggested for much of the severity which was then everywhere exercised against dissent from the established faith, on the ground that difference of religion almost necessarily implied aversion, if not active hostility, towards the civil power. Proceeding on this principle, nations at war

* Journals of Commons, October 26-30, 1680. Parliamentary History, vol. iv. p. 1162, &c. Life of James, vol. i. p. 601. In this last the details are given at great length, and, upon the whole, with accuracy. Reresby, p. 104. Burnet, Own Times, vol. ii. p. 246. All the bishops present voted against the bill.

* Commons' Journals, November 17-27, 1680. Ralph, p. 560. Life of James, vol. i. p. 618. Macpherson, vol. i. p. 108.

with each other courted the alliance of the nonconformists in the enemy's country. England aided the Huguenots in France; the Dutch negotiated with the Covenanters in Scotland; and Louis XIV. was ever ready to lend his gold or his arms to whatever sect he found dissatisfied with their rulers, if arrayed against him in the field. So long, in short, as religion was so closely connected with political systems that either liberty or despotism almost necessarily followed the adoption of a particular creed, some excuse may be made for the zeal of the guardians of the British constitution, in creating securities for public freedom and the Protestant faith.

But as the importance of an object, however great, does not justify the use of improper means, the conduct of the Whig leaders is open to considerable objection when viewed in reference to the arts which they condescended to employ. The means supplied to them by the credulity of the people and the terrors of the popish plot, were used with a very unsparing hand; and human life was held of very little value when weighed against the success of a measure by which they meant to accomplish the overthrow of their political adversaries. Being defeated in most of their favourite projects, they returned with fresh zeal to the prosecution of the Roman Catholic lords, whose confinement in the Tower was now extended for several years. The first victim selected by them was the Viscount Stafford, an aged man, and generally reputed of very moderate talents. He was accused by Titus Oates of accepting the office of paymaster in the papal army about to be raised for the subjugation of England; and Tuberville, a new witness quite as villainous as the old informers, swore that five years before, at Paris, Strafford had engaged him to assassinate the king. The infamy of the individuals, Oates, Dugdale, and Tuberville, by whose evidence the several charges were supported, was overlooked or forgotten; the improbability of most of them, though clearly illustrated, made no impression; and the

defence of the venerable nobleman, though it refuted the more weighty of the allegations brought forward by the authors of the impeachment, failed to procure his acquittal in the judgment of his peers. He was found guilty, and condemned to suffer the penalty of a traitor. The king remitted the more ignominious parts of the sentence, the hanging and quartering; an exercise of his prerogative which was called in question by the sheriffs of London as an encroachment on the privileges of national justice.*

Even the sacrifice now described was not enough to satiate the fury of the popular faction. They proceeded to inflict vengeance on all who had opposed their designs against the duke; voting that whoever had advised his Majesty to reject the Exclusion bill were promoters of popery and enemies to the king and kingdom. They voted also that until the said bill were passed they could not, consistently with their duty to their constituents, grant any manner of supply, and lest he should by any other means be enabled to carry on the government, they passed a resolution, that if any individual should advance money to the sovereign, on the credit of the royal revenue, whether customs, excise, or any stated imposts, he should be held responsible for his doings to Parliament. They further resolved to form themselves into an association for the safety of the king's person, for defence of the Protestant religion, and for preventing the duke of York or any papist whatever from ascending the throne: a proceeding which, in spirit as well as in form, bore a great resemblance to the celebrated Covenant which had bound the nation in resistance to the royal authority. Finding the lower House

* Echard, vol. ii. p. 694. Lord Russell is said to have seconded in the House of Commons the scruple as to the king's power to remit part of the sentence. Lord John Russell, in his life of his relative, acknowledges "that the testimony of Echard is sufficient for inducing us to think it probable that Lord Russell, in some way or other, gave his approbation to the queries of the sheriffs; and it is undoubtedly the circumstance, if true, the most to be lamented in his whole life." See also Hallam, vol. ii. p. 611. Perhaps the strongest evidence for the fact is the expression used by Charles when Lord Russell himself was condemned, "He shall know that I am possessed of that prerogative which in the case of Lord Stafford he thought proper to deny me."

so utterly intractable, Charles determined to dissolve them; and accordingly with that view, on the 10th January, 1681, he proceeded to the preliminary step of a prorogation. While the usher of the Black Rod was at their door they passed sundry resolutions in great haste and confusion; voting, though in the midst of tumult, that whosoever had advised the monarch to adopt the measure he was now pursuing was a betrayer of the Protestant religion and of the English nation; adding, that it was the opinion of the House that London, in 1666, had been burned by the Roman Catholics, in pursuance of their intention to introduce popery and arbitrary power.

A new Parliament, elected without delay, was appointed to meet at Oxford, a city less exposed than London to the influence of the multitude. Sixteen peers presented to his Majesty, by the hands of Lord Essex, a strong petition, entreating him to continue the sitting at Westminster, and attributing his choice of the university town to the counsels of wicked men, favourers of popery, promoters of French interests, and enemies of England. The allusion to France in this case was not made without reason; for the king, finding he could obtain no supplies from his people through the authorized channel, had stooped to another treaty with Louis, who, by promising two millions of livres for the current year, and five hundred thousand for the two following, induced his royal brother to disengage himself at once from the Spanish alliance, and from the thralldom of his own Parliament. Both parties proceeded to Oxford in mutual fear and suspicion, armed as well with the sword as with the emblems of their respective principles. The Exclusionists, who kept their purpose constantly in view, lost no time in bringing forward a bill for its legal accomplishment; while, on the other hand, to gratify their zeal, without actually depriving the duke of his right, an expedient was proposed, namely, that James should be compelled to retire during the remainder of his life to the distance of five hundred miles

from the British dominions; that, on the death of his brother, he should assume the title of king, but that all the powers of government should be vested in a regent, who should exercise them in the name of the absent sovereign. It was proposed that the delegated authority should, in the first instance, be confided to the princess of Orange, his daughter, and afterwards to the Lady Anne, and that if the duke should have a legitimate son, duly instructed in the Protestant faith, the regency should expire as soon as he should come of age. This expedient, however, which was obviously attended with many objections, was rejected by the Commons after a debate of two days; and a resolution was immediately passed to bring in a bill for disqualifying James duke of York from inheriting the imperial crown, and all the dominions thereto belonging.

The discussions on this question could not possibly present any novelty; but on this occasion their progress was interrupted by a little incident, which called into full activity the resentment and intrigue of the two great parties who had so long been struggling for the ascendancy. Fitzharris, a native of Ireland, who had served as a volunteer in the French army, found access to the duchess of Portsmouth, in whose household a female cousin was employed as a confidential servant. He at first attached himself to the court, where his loyalty and the merits of his wife's father, a naval officer, had procured him a pension of two hundred pounds, but afterwards meeting with a Scotchman named Everard, he resolved, in company with this adventurer, to plunge into the sea of politics, and seek for his reward in the capacity of pamphleteer and informer. They agreed to charge the king with a participation in the schemes attributed to his brother, and called upon all true Protestants to unsheathe their swords, stand by the Parliament, and oppose to the death the designs of the two popish princes. Being thrown into prison for this offence, Fitzharris next bethought himself of the safer course of accusing the duke and the leading

Romanists of an intention to murder the sovereign; and accordingly, when his examination was taken, he deposed that he himself had been offered, by an agent of the duchess of Modena, ten thousand pounds to undertake the task. Upon hearing this intelligence the Parliament resolved to avail themselves of his plot, hoping that the progress of their bill through the two Houses might be accelerated by his disclosures. But the king, who was now master of their diplomacy, made haste to disappoint their intrigues. To prevent access to the prisoner he removed him from Newgate to the Tower, and to put it out of the power of either House to assist him at their bar, he gave instructions to the attorney-general to proceed against him as chargeable with the crime of high treason. Not to be outdone by his Majesty in cunning, the enemies of the duke, who found no difficulty in identifying the revelations of Fitzharris with the popish plot, instantly resolved to impeach him before the Lords, where he would have an opportunity of bringing into full light the hidden deeds of the conspirators, including the occupant and heir of the throne. This suggestion being adopted, the impeachment was put into the hands of the same secretary who had signed the warrant for his committal to the Tower, with orders to carry it to the upper House, the Opposition members thereby securing to themselves a certain degree of revenge, whatever might be the final issue of their stratagem. But here, as at the former stage, the king was prepared to meet them; the attorney-general instantly appeared in the presence of their lordships, and laid before them the instructions he had received for the prosecution, and also the indictment on which it was to proceed.*

A nice question now arose as to the competency of the House of Lords to bring to trial any other than their own peers. The Whigs maintained that a subject of any degree might be impeached, and conse-

* *Commons' Journals*, March 25, 1681. *Lords' Journals*, vol. xiii. p. 755. *Parliamentary History*, vol. iv. p. 1818, &c.

quently tried, in the upper House of Parliament; that all cases of offence where the crown was concerned might fall under the judicial branch of their authority; and that, in fact, they had no more right to reject a legal complaint brought before them, than the ordinary judges have in the inferior courts. The lord chancellor, however, produced decisions which directly opposed these arguments as urged by the Commons; and the House resolved "that Fitzharris should be proceeded with according to the course of common law, and not by way of impeachment in Parliament at this time." This vote gave the greatest offence to the prosecutors, who hesitated not to declare that it amounted to a denial of justice, a violation of the constitution, and an obstruction to the further discovery of the popish plot, adding, that any subordinate tribunal which should proceed to the trial of Fitzharris would be guilty of a high breach of the privileges of the House of Commons. This burst of ill temper did not deter the king from his resolution to bring the traitor to condign punishment. Doubts were, indeed, felt by the jury as to their power of finding a man guilty who had been impeached by Parliament, and more especially with reference to the threatening of the lower House, but the judges having assured them that such an occurrence was no bar to their proceedings, the trial went on in the usual manner. The writing of the libel being clearly proved, the only question that could be raised respected the motive; and to avert the doom which he saw hanging over him, he asserted that he acted as a spy of the court and in subservience to the duchess of Portsmouth. After sentence was pronounced, he attempted to bribe the mercy of the sovereign by throwing the blame of the imposture on the Opposition party, saying that all the fictions he uttered had been suggested to him by the two Whig sheriffs of London, aided by Treby the recorder. This unprincipled device did not avail him, though, perhaps, it may have given rise to certain prosecutions upon which the govern-

ment now thought proper to enter, stimulated by a desire to retaliate the injuries which had been heaped so long and so heavily on their friends.*

As the tide had now turned in favour of the court, the spies and witnesses who were found so serviceable to the other party showed a readiness to be employed against their former patrons Shaftesbury and his adherents could hardly denounce as unworthy of credit the same persons who had established the popish plot, and on whose evidence Lord Stafford had been condemned. The first individual singled out for prosecution was a London mechanic named College, a noisy and violent demagogue, who had taken a prominent part against the Roman Catholics. He had been acquitted by a Middlesex jury, but found no mercy from a body of country squires assembled in the court-house of Oxford. Emboldened by this victory, the government resolved next to attack their great enemy, Shaftesbury, who was thrown into prison, and accused of treason by the very individuals who had gratified his political rage by their false testimony against the Roman Catholics. But as the sheriffs of the metropolis had long figured as his avowed partizans, he could count on impunity from the character of the grand jury whom such persons would summon to investigate the charge, and determine whether he should be put on his defence. The witnesses in this case were as alert as on any former occasion to hazard the boldest statements, and to confirm them by oath; but the ears of the jurors were now closed against the averments of men covered with the vilest infamy, and who, it was no longer doubtful, had sold themselves as instruments of malice and revenge. The earl accordingly had the satisfaction to see the bill ignored, and, at the same time, to hear the shouts of the multitude who exulted in his

acquittal. His papers had been seized, and there was found among them the draft of an association against popery and arbitrary power; but it contained no trace of his handwriting, and he declared that he knew nothing of it—an assertion which had weight with his judges, though it has not found credit with posterity.

Shaftesbury accelerated his own disgrace by the activity which he showed in collecting evidence against the titular archbishop of Armagh, Oliver Plunket, a prelate whose loyalty had repeatedly called forth the praise of the Irish government. It had appeared rather unaccountable to those who reflected on events as they passed before them, that while England, which contained comparatively few members of the Romish school, was kept in a state of constant alarm by Roman Catholic conspiracies, Ireland, of which the population was chiefly popish, should enjoy uninterrupted tranquillity. To remove this discrepancy, as well as to rouse the fears of the Protestants in both islands, it was resolved to conjure up a plot in the neighbouring country; and as witnesses could easily be procured to substantiate any charge, however improbable, nothing more was necessary than the choice of a principal conspirator. The archbishop was fixed upon, and, for the convenience of his accusers, conveyed to England, where he was informed that he had been raised to the dignity of primate in order to prepare the way for an invasion from France; that he had made a survey of the coast, and fixed on the proper harbours for the debarkation of the enemy, that he had mustered all the Roman Catholics capable of bearing arms, and had a force of seventy thousand ready to join the foreigners, massacre all the Protestants, and establish the papal worship throughout the whole land. Without being allowed the means of proving the absurdity of such allegations, he was found guilty and put to death. The earl of Essex, it is said, who had been lord deputy of Ireland, solicited his pardon from the king, declaring from his own knowledge that the charges against

* *State Trials*, vol viii p. 830, &c. Dr Lingard mentions a pamphlet entitled a Narrative, being a True Relation of what Discourse passed between Dr Hawkins and Edward Fitzharris, Esq., late Prisoner in the Tower. In opposition there was published a tract called Truth Vindicated, or a Detection of the Aspersions and Scandals in the name of Dr. Hawkins.

him could not be true. His Majesty replied with great indignation, "Then, my lord, be his blood on your own conscience. You might have saved him if you would. I cannot pardon him, because I dare not."*

The dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, which took place after the rejection of "the expedient," and before they had completed a session of ten days, has usually been considered as the means of saving the country from the horrors of civil war. It was no longer concealed that the Whigs had formed a determination to deprive James of the succession, at whatever hazard this object might be accomplished, and it was equally well known that the duke of York, relying on the aid of France and the support of a large portion of the people, who venerated hereditary right, would, in the event of his exclusion, have made an appeal to arms. Both parties had this terrible alternative present to their thoughts, and acknowledged as a secret motive in the principal measures which they, by methods so extremely questionable, were labouring to carry in defiance of each other. It is manifest that there was, at this epoch of Charles' reign, so large an infusion of the democratical spirit in the lower House, that the government had ceased to have any influence over their deliberations. Nay, to oppose the wishes of the cabinet seems to have become, in most of their proceedings, the rule by which they framed their resolutions and gave their votes. They had refused all supplies, even such as were necessary for the ordinary business of the nation, except on terms to which they were aware his Majesty would not accede. If, therefore, any consideration could palliate the humiliating state of dependence in which he had placed himself towards France, it must be sought in that unhappy contention of rival factions which, at the period in question, deprived the supreme authority of its natural support, the concurrence of the representative body who con-

stitutionally hold in their hands the public purse. On the other part, the stern, bigoted character of James, coupled with the events which led to the Revolution, supplies an apology for the object pursued by the country party, as they were called, though it cannot excuse the barbarous policy which they employed for its attainment. But without entering into further details, it may be asserted that the method adopted by Charles was the only one which, in the peculiar circumstances of his government, could have prevented the collusion whence in all probability would have resulted, either a more confirmed despotism, or a temporary republic.

From the year 1681 to the end of his life the king called no more Parliaments; the reactionary feeling which had taken possession of the public mind served to render him virtually absolute, and the popular leaders found it in vain to attempt to dispute the ascendancy he had obtained. The Whigs, says Mr. Hallam, so lately in the heyday of their pride, lay, like the fallen angels, prostrate upon the fiery lake*. The scoffs and gibes of the mercenary scribblers, whom they themselves had encouraged to attack public men, were now showered upon their own heads, the hounds whom they had formerly let loose upon the courtiers, having acquired a relish for blood, now turned upon them with savage howl, threatening to tear them in pieces, and the murders which they had sanctioned, under cover of law, seemed about to be retaliated upon them to an equal extent, through the medium of the same corrupted channel. Of their whole number, introduced into the council a few years before, not one now remained; Salisbury having retired, and Essex, Sunderland, and Temple having been dismissed, the power of the state was now placed entirely in the hands of their enemies. In this condition of affairs Charles received a visit from his nephew, the Prince of Orange, whose professed object was to concert a league with him, in conjunction with the other sove-

* Lingard, vol. xiii. p. 288. State Trials, vol. viii. p. 447. Chalmers, vol. ii. p. 461. Burnet, vol. ii. p. 279.

* Constitutional History, vol. ii. p. 610.

reigns of Europe, against Louis XIV., already become formidable to Spain, Germany, and Holland. Perhaps the stadtholder had other reasons for his voyage to a country where his interests were fondly cherished by a large band of politicians, who were never thwarted in the prosecution of their plans by any nice scruples of loyalty. He pressed the king to call a Parliament, as the only means of giving satisfaction to the nation; but when his Majesty asked if he had ascertained the grounds on which that assembly would consent to be reconciled, his reply seemed to indicate a complete surrender of the whole royal prerogative.*

In the excited state of the public mind in England against the duke of York, it was found necessary to keep him for some time out of sight, and after a brief sojourn on the Continent he was sent down to Scotland. Lauderdale, incapacitated by intemperance and disease, had now been laid aside,† and his office conferred on the earl of Moray. Sir George Mackenzie was appointed king's advocate, and carried on the persecution of the Covenanters with unrelenting severity. No sex or age was spared, and the execution of two poor young women, one of them under twenty, at this time merely for holding opinions which the law condemned, excited deep and general indignation.‡

The Scottish Parliament, which had not met for nine years, was convened in the month of July, 1681, under the auspices of the duke, who was appointed commissioner to represent his Majesty. He had no difficulty in obtaining an Act which secured his succession to the throne of that kingdom. To obviate, however, the just suspicions of the nation in regard to the religion of this prince, a test was devised by the legislature to be taken by all persons holding a public office in the church,

* *Masure, Hist. de la Révolution*, p. 294. North, *Examen* Life of James the Second, vol. i. p. 691.

† He died shortly after at Tunbridge, the close of his flagitious career having been greatly embittered by the tyranny of his wife, a woman noted for her haughtiness, rapacity, and violent passions.

‡ Fountainhall.

government, or army, on the penalty of losing their goods and estates. It bound them to profess the true Protestant faith, as contained in the Confession sanctioned in the year 1567; to renounce the National Covenant and Solemn League; and finally, to disclaim all attempts to bring about any alteration either in church or state, and to engage for the support and defence of the crown against all opposition. The bishops and clergy, little disposed as they were to embarrass the government, scrupled to take this test without certain modifications in the language, which, upon being submitted to the consideration of the council, were approved by the king. Notwithstanding, no fewer than eighty of the clergy still remained dissatisfied with the terms in which the oath was expressed, as subjecting the church too much to the caprice of the monarch. They accordingly resigned their livings, but some of them, who were advised to cross the Tweed, were provided with benefices through the activity of certain prelates who approved their principles.*

The episcopal clergy were not the only persons who objected to this new test. Several even of the courtiers scrupled to take it, and the earl of Queensberry, the justice-general, refused to swear it unless he were allowed to add an explanation. A number of the noblemen and gentlemen who held situations of trust hesitated to comply, and were in consequence ejected from their offices. The professed object of the test was the maintenance of the Protestant religion, but it had been converted into an instrument for enforcing passive obedience, and was so hastily and heedlessly framed that it was found on examination to be a mass of contradictions and absurdities.

In order to save the duke of York from swearing to maintain the Protestant religion, the courtiers proposed that all princes of the blood should be exempted from taking

* Burnet, vol. ii. p. 519. "About twenty of them came up to England, I found them men of excellent tempers, pious and learned, and I esteemed it no small happiness that I got the most of them to be well settled."

the oath. This exception was zealously opposed by the earl of Argyle, who observed that the main danger which the Protestant faith had to dread was from the perversion of the royal family. These words sank deep into the mind of the duke, who was of a most unforgiving disposition, and Argyle was soon made to feel the effects of his resentment. The earl himself offered to resign his office of privy councillor rather than subscribe the test; but at the request of the duke he at length agreed to take it, with an explanation which he had beforehand communicated to his royal highness, that he assented to it as far as it was consistent with itself and the Protestant religion. On the single alleged ground of this explanation the earl was brought to trial for treason, leasing-making, and perjury, and by a most scandalous perversion of law and justice he was found guilty and condemned to death. But on the evening before the sentence was to be carried into execution (20th December), he made his escape from the castle in the disguise of a page holding up the train of his step-daughter, Lady Sophia Lindsay. In spite of a keen pursuit he succeeded in reaching London, where he lurked for a short time, and ultimately passed over to Holland. Sentence of attainder was immediately pronounced against him, his estates were confiscated, and a large reward was offered for his head.*

As the court had now completely triumphed over the patriotic party in England, the duke was recalled to London. But in the following May he paid another and a final visit to Scotland. The *Gloucester* frigate, in which he took his passage, struck upon a sand-bank near Yarmouth and was lost. The duke, however, escaped in the barge along with a number of his favourites, having, according to Burnet, been mainly solicitous to save his priests and his dogs. On reaching Scotland he made various changes in the government, which, however, brought no alleviation to the sufferings of the unhappy Presbyterians, for whom the

furnace was "heated one seven times more than it was wont to be heated." The duke seemed to take pleasure in witnessing scenes which filled even the servile and hardened courtiers with horror, and when the members of the privy council hurried from the chamber James surveyed the horrid spectacle with perfect calmness and unconcern, and watched the agonies of the tortured Covenanters with as much complacency as if he had been observing some scientific experiment*. New and more stringent laws were enacted against nonconformists, heavier penalties were inflicted, and novel and more barbarous punishments devised. Not only were those punished who attended conventicles, but those who heard of any such meetings and neglected to give immediate notice to the nearest officer or magistrate, were to be held equally guilty with the proscribed offenders. The military were invested with full justiciary powers to examine, condemn, and execute, or otherwise punish, all suspected persons. A proclamation was issued which denounced the penalties of treason against all who had ever harboured or conversed with rebels, even though "neither forfeited as traitors nor denounced at the time for rebellion," and against all who were suspected of having conversed with the disaffected even by accident. Circuit justiciary courts for their trial were appointed to perambulate the south and west districts of the country, where at least twenty thousand persons were involved in this new crime†.

Having humbled the English patriots in Parliament and scattered their leaders, the cabinet next resolved to take revenge on the corporations of borough towns, and more particularly on that of London, which had shown so much activity in the popular cause. The ground on which charters were held, as it partook not less of royal favour than of municipal law, was exposed in some degree to the inroad now made upon it by the exercise of the prerogative;

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 588.

† Fountainhall's Decisions, vol. i. p. 205.

* State Trials, vol. 2. Burnet, vol. i. p. 521.

and hence, in most instances, to avoid an unprofitable contest with the supreme authority, most of the cities and towns surrendered their liberties, and new charters were granted which gave the ascendancy everywhere to the Tories. In the metropolis the power of the Opposition party was entirely broken down, the court of King's Bench pronounced that the franchises of the city were forfeited to the crown, and the king refused to restore its privileges except on the following terms: that no mayor, sheriff, recorder, common-sergeant, town-clerk, or coroner, should be admitted to his office without his Majesty's approbation, and that if he disapproved twice of a mayor or sheriff, he himself might appoint these officers by commission.

The influence of the crown was now about to receive a great accession, from the defeat of a conspiracy which implicated some of the highest characters in the land. It originated in the fears generally entertained for the safety of the Protestant faith if the duke of York should ascend the throne, and may be traced to the period when his Majesty's illness seemed to open a prospect to the succession of his unpopular brother. On that occasion, it is understood, Monmouth, and the Lords Russell and Grey, instigated by Shaftesbury, came to the resolution that, should the king's malady prove fatal, an effort should be made by force of arms to prevent the occupation of the throne by the popish heir. This determination was in some degree confirmed by the sudden dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, when the same noblemen, joined by some others, had agreed to continue their sittings in defiance of the royal will. The imprisonment of Shaftesbury, and the arbitrary steps taken with regard to the charter of the city of London, increased the dissatisfaction which prevailed in the capital as well as in the country at large; in consequence of which arrangements were made for a rising in the west, in Devonshire, at Bristol, and in various parts of Cheshire. In London alone, it is said that ten thousand were

ready to rise, attack the guards, and seize all the posts in the neighbourhood of the Tower, the parks, and the palaces. But the retirement of Shaftesbury, who consulted his safety by fleeing to Holland, and the caution of Lord Russell, who was averse to the shedding of blood, postponed the execution of a plot of which the ramifications are acknowledged to have been very extensive.

This partial disappointment, however, did not divert the conspirators altogether from their purpose; and in order to act with greater concert, the management of the scheme was committed to Monmouth, Russell, Essex, Howard, Algernon Sidney, and John Hampden, men who, though they agreed in opposition to the actual government, were not of the same mind as to the objects which ought to be ultimately pursued. Argyle, too, who kept up a correspondence with the malcontents in Scotland, declared himself ready, if arms were provided, to embark in their enterprise at the head of ten thousand Covenanters. Among the subordinate conspirators was Rumbold, a maltster, who had a farm in Hertfordshire, called the Rye-house, from which the plot took its name, and who, with Rumsey and Walcot, two military officers, was wont to indulge in very wild discourse relative to the death of the king and the extinction of the reigning branch of his family. To these secret machinations, which seem to have been unknown to the personal friends of Monmouth, was admitted a person named Keeling, a London tradesman, who, being liable to a prosecution for some civil offence, thought proper to make his peace with the government by betraying his confederates. Rumsey was soon induced to follow the same example, and Walcot, when apprehended, offered, in a letter which he wrote to Secretary Jenkins, to supply the crown lawyers with abundance of evidence, on condition of being himself pardoned. His mean proposal was rejected, and he with two others, Rouse and Hone, underwent

the penalty of treason, all of them confessing at their last moments the justice of the sentence by which they were doomed to suffer.

These executions were merely preliminary to proceedings against men of much higher rank and power. Monmouth had confessed his offence and obtained his father's forgiveness, but thought it prudent to go into voluntary exile. Lord Russell, being the person next to him in consequence, was the first brought to trial, of that cabal of six who had assumed the chief direction of affairs. The chief witness against him was Lord Howard, a thorough scoundrel, who, stimulated by the love of life, made haste, in the hope of obtaining a pardon, to reveal the whole conspiracy. No doubt could remain that an insurrection was meditated, and that Russell concurred in the propriety of making an attempt, if necessary, to exclude the duke by force of arms, and that he had listened without objection to a plan proposed by others for *surprising and disarming the guards*, but there was no reason to believe that he ever contemplated the assassination of Charles, as recommended by the associates of Rumbold. The court strained every effort to effect the condemnation of their dreaded opponent. There can be no question that the law of treason, severe as it was, if honestly administered, would have saved the prisoner's life; for he had neither actually levied war against the king, nor directly used means for compassing his death. It was argued by the crown counsel, that the intention of murdering his Majesty was necessarily implied in the conspiracy for raising a rebellion against him, an inference which, however, is clearly at variance with the words of all the statutes in which treason is defined as a capital crime. The trial of Lord Russell at the Old Bailey is one of the most memorable scenes in English history. The serene dignity of his demeanour, the simplicity of his defence, the touching incident of his noble-minded wife standing by his side and acting as his amanuensis, have

often furnished themes both for poets and painters. He was, of course, found guilty and condemned to death. Every effort that could be made for his pardon, was made by his heroic wife and heart-broken father. But both the king and his brother were obstinately bent on his death, and closed their ears against all supplications for mercy. The last hours of the illustrious victim were spent in religious exercises, and brightened by the loving and hopeful consolations of his wife. His execution took place not, as usual, on Tower Hill, but in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, on the 21st of July, "In order that the citizens might be humbled by the spectacle of their once triumphant leader carried in his coach to death through the city." He was attended on the scaffold by Tillotson and Burnet—the former prayed, and the latter recorded his lordship's last words. These were but few, as he "never loved much speaking, and had set down in a paper, which he handed to the sheriff, all that he thought proper to leave behind him." He submitted to his iniquitous sentence with great calmness and resolution; and when the head of the illustrious victim of tyranny and injustice was held up by the executioner, "a general groan went round the scaffold, and in every face was to be read the anguish which had taken possession of every heart." The paper which Lord Russell delivered to the sheriff was immediately printed and circulated, and, much to the annoyance of the court, produced a deep impression on the public mind.

On the same day on which Lord Russell was judicially murdered, the university of Oxford published its famous "Judgment and Decree" in support of passive obedience, formally condemning a long series of political propositions collected out of the works of Buchanan, Bellarmine, Milton, Hobbes, Owen, Knox, Baxter, and other writers, and pronouncing "all and every of these propositions false, seditious, and impious; most of them heretical and blasphemous," and ordered all the books con-

taining them to be burnt. It also enjoined, that "that most necessary doctrine (passive obedience), which in a manner is the badge and character of the Church of England," should be diligently taught by all readers, tutors, and catechists.

On the 7th of September Algernon Sydney was brought to trial at the bar of the King's Bench, where the notorious Jeffreys now presided. The only witness that could be produced against him was that Lord Howard of Escric, who had borne testimony against Lord Russell—a man of a singularly base and cowardly character ("that monster of a man," as Evelyn terms him), and who, as was proved by numerous witnesses of high rank and unimpeachable veracity, had repeatedly affirmed in private that the plot was forged in the dark by priests and jesuits, and had offered to declare to Lord Halifax, under his hand and seal, that there was no such plot to his knowledge. Jeffreys, however, held with Finch, the solicitor-general, that this testimony had not in the least impeached the credit of Lord Howard as a witness. Still the difficulty remained that his testimony was not supported by the evidence of any other witness.

The law, it was well known, required two witnesses to establish any overt act of treason; and though many were present who were ready to swear that a plot existed, no one, except Howard, could connect Sidney with the plans and deliberations of the alleged conspirators. To supply this deficiency a singular and most disgraceful expedient was adopted. The prisoner was an open and avowed republican, and had devoted many of his leisure hours to the delineation of the most complete form of a commonwealth, in which all the happiness of human life might be enjoyed, and all its miseries avoided. When Sydney's papers were seized there were found in his study some of those fanciful speculations on government in which the ancients were wont to indulge, when pursuing the phantoms of their benevolent dreams on the perfectibility of the human race. In such essays resistance

to tyranny could not fail to be recommended, and the love of freedom to be extolled; the one as the most bounden duty, and the other as the richest blessing incident to man as a member of a civilized community. The theoretical notions thus embodied in an unpublished work, which was not even proved to be in his hand-writing, were produced in court as a supplement to Lord Howard's evidence, and were by the judges declared to be equivalent to the testimony of a second witness. He complained, and with great reason, of the iniquity practised against him. The paper, he said, was not proved upon him, and it was not a crime even if it had been proved. The ink of the manuscript was so visibly old, that it might be presumed that the treatise had been written twenty years before, and there could be no treason in answering, as the paper did, the work of such a writer as Filmer, who had maintained that possession was the only right to power. Sydney, however, did not deny the existence of the conspiracy, in which Monmouth and Russell had led him to participate, for the exclusion of the duke of York from the throne. On the contrary, he considered that such aspirations after liberty were honourable to the character of enlightened men; and that no suffering was too painful, no sacrifice too severe to be undergone, for the consummation of an object so glorious. The jury brought in a verdict of guilty, and on the 26th of November the prisoner was brought up to receive judgment, which Jeffreys, contrary to usage, undertook to pronounce in person. Sydney stated several strong legal points in arrest of judgment, but they were at once overruled by Jeffreys, who roared out, "We very well understand our duty; we don't need to be told by you what our duty is; we tell you nothing but law; the treason is well laid." Some other objections were set aside in the same peremptory manner by this unscrupulous court tool, who bellowed out, "There remains nothing for the court to do but to pass sentence." "I must appeal to God and the world I am not heard,"

exclaimed Sydney. "Appeal to whom you will," rejoined Jeffreys, who then proceeded with evident satisfaction to pronounce sentence of death, with all its horrible details. Out of consideration for the noble family of Leicester, to which Sydney belonged, the sentence was commuted into beheading, and on the 8th of December he mounted the scaffold with the air of a man who came to triumph, not to suffer. His parting words were few, his prayers short, and having placed a paper in the hands of the sheriff, as his last testimony to "the good old cause," he laid his head on the block, and was despatched at one blow.

The question of the Rye-house Plot, after being agitated nearly two hundred years, cannot yet be determined with a perfect freedom from the bias of principle and party. Hence the voluminous discussions, historical and legal, are for the most part nothing better than special pleadings and declamatory assertions. It is clear, however, that it ought to be divided into two parts, according as it was conducted by the subordinate conspirators, who hesitated not to entertain proposals for assassinating the king; and as it was contemplated by Russell and other members of the Council of Six, who certainly meditated nothing beyond the removal of the duke, and certain other securities for the Protestant succession. As to the hazardous expedient of seeking redress by force of arms, there cannot be any doubt that these last gave their consent, and were willing to contribute according to their means to gain the end in view, but notwithstanding these admissions, no one will now maintain that their proceedings, according to the law of England, amounted to actual treason.

Many other trials followed the condemnations occasioned by this plot, in which the accused were treated with great severity, even when the crimes laid to their charge could not be proved. Hampden, who had been concerned in the deliberations at which Monmouth and Russell presided, was punished by the imposition of a fine of forty

thousand pounds. Holloway, a citizen of Bristol, who had also shared in the conspiracy, was executed as a traitor, having been brought back from the West Indies, whither he had fled. The case of Sir Thomas Armstrong was more revolting, and reflected strongly on the character of the king, who is said to have borne great enmity to him. He was seized in Holland, as an outlaw, by Chudleigh the ambassador; and upon being brought before the council, he declared he had nothing to confess, but craved the benefit of a regular trial by a jury of his countrymen. This was refused, on the ground that he had not surrendered himself voluntarily before the expiration of the time assigned in the proclamation, and he was forthwith sentenced as if convicted on his own confession. Charles hated Sir Thomas, though he had been one of his favourites, and his associate in his worst debaucheries, because he believed that Sir Thomas had infused popular principles into the duke of Monmouth. No reader will be displeased to find that Oates, who was indicted for calling the duke of York a popish traitor, was amerced in damages to the extent of a hundred thousand pounds, and condemned to remain in prison till he should make payment. The court cherished a grudge against Sir Samuel Barnardiston, because he had been foreman of the grand jury who ignored the bill of indictment in the case of Lord Shaftesbury. A private letter, addressed by him to Sir Philip Skippon, was intercepted, and the contents were construed into a seditious libel. In this communication to his friend he expressed satisfaction at hearing that Monmouth was again reconciled to his royal father, and made some remarks on the mortification which would thence arise to the king's brother, to whom his pretensions had long given much uneasiness. He was sentenced to pay a fine of ten thousand pounds.* Pilkington, one of the London sheriffs, who had named the juries that had ignored the bills against Shaftesbury

* Burnet, vol. ii. p. 422.

and College, was condemned to pay one hundred thousand pounds in the name of damages to the duke of York, whom he was alleged to have slandered.

During these events the attention of the public appears to have been so completely occupied, as to have lost all remembrance of Danby and the Roman Catholic lords, who were confined in the Tower. The king, who must have frequently considered the hardship of their case, had hitherto avoided every measure which, by relieving them, might revive the clamour of his enemies; and the judges would have found it still more imprudent to interfere with the jurisdiction of the high court of Parliament. The death of Lord Petre, who had sunk under an imprisonment extended to five years, recalled the thoughts of his Majesty to the painful situation of the survivors, and nothing but the fear that Danby, if restored to freedom, might resume his power in the government, deterred the cabinet from seconding the inclinations of the king. This apprehension, however, gave way at length to considerations of clemency and justice, and on the 12th of February, 1684, the nobleman just mentioned, with Lords Powis, Arundel, and Belasis, was brought by writ of habeas corpus before the court of King's Bench; when they were severally discharged, on entering into a recognizance of ten thousand pounds to appear at the bar of the Peers in the next session of Parliament.

The last year of Charles' life, like all the years of his reign, was disturbed by the strife of party. Halifax, dreading the influence of the duke, who had been restored to the control of the Admiralty, and even to a seat in the Council, sought a counterpoise to it in the hold which Monmouth still possessed on the affections of his father. He advised the king to call a Parliament, assuring him that the feeling in favour of the court, produced by the disclosures of the Rye-house Plot, would secure a return of persons devoted to his interests. His

Majesty, who could not endure the mention of a House of Commons, was less reluctant to a reconciliation with his vain and foolish son, who, stealing away from his exile, enjoyed an interview at Windsor and the hope of a speedy recall. James, to whom these proceedings were not unknown, could trace them to the intrigues of the minister, as well as to an insidious policy which moved some of the foreign courts to alarm or provoke him. For these reasons, he pressed on his brother the necessity of removing Halifax from his high office, and of reposing his confidence in some more faithful servant; a change which Charles was supposed to be meditating at the moment when he was seized with his last illness.*

At this period the king attained to a popularity nearly equal to that which gladdened his administration in the early part of his reign. Addresses of congratulation reached his ears from every quarter, expressing strong attachment to his person, a resolution to defend him from dangers similar to those with which he had been threatened, and the avowal of principles which seemed to place the liberties of the country at his discretion. Observing, however, amid all these demonstrations of loyalty, that deep anxiety was felt for the Protestant religion, he resolved to meet the views of the church by giving his niece, the Lady Anne, in marriage to Prince George, brother of the king of Denmark.

Subsequently to the peace of Nimeguen, the government in England could hardly be said to take any interest or to exercise any weight in the political relations of Europe. The French king, whose power was but feebly checked by Spain and the emperor, carried matters with a very high hand, and even attempted to give the law to his neighbours. It was in vain that the Prince of Orange entreated his uncle to

* D'Avaux, iv pp 67-84. Bulstrode, p. 390. Monmouth's Diary in Welwood, 822, 828. Fox, Fragment, Appendix, vi-ix. The year 1688 was distinguished by the death of Prince Rupert, who made so distinguished a figure in the civil wars, and in the sea-fights against the Dutch. In his latter days he enjoyed little favour at court, being suspected of a bias towards the underhand policy of Lord Shaftesbury.

assist, by treaty or by arms, the endeavours of the confederates to confine Louis within the bounds of moderation, and thereby to save the liberties of the continental nations. Charles, who felt no uneasiness at the progress of the grand monarch, and who had condescended to become his pensioner, turned a deaf ear to all such expostulations, regardless of the consequences which, at no distant period, might have affected the commerce of England, her supremacy at sea, and even her independence as a state of the first order. All evils were insignificant in his estimation when compared with the disputes and turmoil of a contentious Parliament, from whose pockets no money could be extracted but at the expense of his prerogative, and of what he valued still more, his voluptuous ease.

Ireland, which was governed as a province by royal deputies, presents nothing during the latter portion of this reign which could in the smallest degree interest the general reader. The intrigues of the court were, no doubt, felt there as well as in all departments where office could be sought or promotion obtained; and the ebb and flow of party influence in the cabinet was accordingly perceived in that country by the accession of a new lord lieutenant, the appointment of a judge, or the elevation of a commander-in-chief. In Scotland, several persons were punished for their alleged participation in the counsels of the Ryehouse Plot. Among these was Baillie of Jerviswood, "a learned and worthy gentleman," as Burnet terms him. The evidence produced against him was most defective, and the king's advocate, "the bloody Mackenzie," who pressed for his conviction, was compelled to acknowledge in open court that he had said privately to Baillie himself, that he was satisfied of his innocence. He was notwithstanding found guilty, and executed the same day, lest death by a natural stroke should rescue him from the penalty of the law. The period which followed the judicial murder of Baillie was usually termed "Killing Time" by the Pres-

byterians, to denote the peculiar severity of the persecutions to which they were then subjected. Driven to despair by the treatment they received, they abjured Charles Stewart as a merciless tyrant, and openly declared war against all who promoted what they designated his wicked and hellish designs. The deed by which this was accomplished bore the title of the Apologetical Declaration, and was affixed to the doors of the parish churches during the night. In reply to it a royal proclamation instantly appeared, denouncing the penalty of death on all who should acknowledge the said paper, or who refused to disown it; enjoining every proprietor to produce a list of the people who lived upon his estate; requiring certificates of loyalty from every person who left his wonted residence; and offering a reward for the discovery of those who had in any way been accessory to the seditious publication. A form of abjuration was drawn out, which the soldiers were authorized to enforce under the penalty of instant death. Special commissions were appointed, with justiciary powers to try those accused or suspected of sympathy with the declaration. Those who failed to appear when summoned, were to have their goods confiscated and their houses burned; and the children above twelve years of age of those who were condemned or executed, were to be sold as slaves to the Plantations. A royal warrant, signed by the king himself, directed that women who obstinately adhered to the principles of the Covenanters should be drowned. These inhuman decrees were executed to the letter, and the atrocities perpetrated at this time by such men as Grierson of Lagg, Johnstone of Westerhall, Captain Douglas, brother of the marquis of Queensberry, Bruce of Earls hall, Urquhart of Meldrum, and above all by Graham of Claverhouse, have left an indelible impression on the minds of the Scottish people.

On the morning of the 2nd of February, 1685, Charles, who had been unwell during the night, displayed symptoms of apoplexy;

and although the usual expedients were employed, he derived no other benefit from them than to check the progress of the disease till the 6th of the month, when he expired. The archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of London, Durham, Ely, Bath and Wells, were in constant attendance day and night; and on the morning of the 5th, Bishop Ken, who, as well as the others, saw death rapidly approaching, thought it his duty to inform his Majesty that human means could not much longer avert the fate which was to throw the nation into mourning. The king manifested neither fear nor surprise, but joined in the forms of religion with composure, acknowledging his transgressions of the divine law, and praying for pardon. He declined, however, to receive the holy communion from the hand of the pious prelate who addressed him, remarking that "there was still time," or that "he would think of it;" but through the instrumentality of the duke of York, a Romish priest, named Huddleston, was privately introduced into the king's bedchamber, from whom he accepted both extreme unction and the eucharist. At noon next day, Friday the 6th of February, Charles passed away without a struggle.

There were found among the manuscripts written by Charles' own hand, two papers containing arguments in favour of the popish faith; and these being afterwards published by his successor confirmed the suspicions always entertained of the royal sincerity, and the apprehensions of those who dreaded an attack on the Protestant religion. The great body of the people, notwithstanding, bore much kindness towards the dying monarch, whose frank and familiar manners had gained their affections. When his malady was announced, a deep gloom spread over the metropolis; and the report of his temporary convalescence was received

with expressions of great joy by the mass of the citizens. At the last moment, they fixed their thoughts on him as a man whose early life had passed in danger and romance, whose temper was jovial and his disposition mild; willingly forgetting that, as a sovereign, he had humiliated and disgraced the kingdom which he governed, and dreaded the representatives of his people more than the ambition, the intrigues, and the arms of France.

The reign of the second Charles has often been described as the transition state from a practical despotism to a regulated system of freedom. In accomplishing this result, it will be acknowledged, the democratical principle was much more powerful than either of the two other co-ordinate elements of the constitution, and hence, if the king had not contrived to suspend the contest, a civil war must have ensued in his time, or the revolution been anticipated by a period of ten years. The violence of the popular party defeated in a great measure the good ends which they professed to have in view, and brought upon themselves the mortification of seeing the crown not only invested with a greatly increased influence, but even viewed with a growing veneration on the part of the multitude, who are the most easily led astray. The reign of this monarch will be for ever memorable on account of the Habeas Corpus Act, passed in the year 1679, which put an end to arbitrary punishment, and secured the personal freedom of the subject on the firm basis of law.*

* Burnet, vol. ii pp 454-460. Life of James II, vol. i p 746. Dalrymple, Appendix 94, for Letter of Bouillon. Huddleston, Brief Account. Evelyn, vol. iii p 128. Lingard, vol. xiii p 879. Fox, Appendix, xv. It is esteemed doubtful whether Charles' disease was apoplexy or epilepsy, though all the symptoms recorded seem to prove that it must have been the former. Mr Fox (Introductory Chapter, p. lxxvii), appears to give some credit to the opinion of the duchess of Portsmouth, that the king was poisoned, a fiction which can only be accounted for by ascribing it to the prejudices of the age and the sudden attack of the distemper.

CHAPTER XII.—A.D. 1685.

JAMES II.

ACCESSION OF JAMES—CHARACTER OF THE NEW KING—HIS MINISTERS—RESOLVES TO SUMMON A MEETING OF PARLIAMENT—HIS CONNECTION WITH THE FRENCH COURT—HE ACCEPTS OF A SUBSIDY FROM LOUIS—POLICY OF THE FRENCH KING—FEELINGS OF THE OTHER CONTINENTAL POWERS—OBJECTS OF JAMES—ENTHUSIASM OF THE TORIES' ADDRESSES—PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF ROMAN CATHOLIC RITES IN THE PALACE AND IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY—THE ELECTIONS—PROCEEDINGS AGAINST OATES AND DANGERFIELD—FRIGHTFUL PUNISHMENT INFLICTED ON THEM—MEETING OF PARLIAMENT—ITS SUBSERVIENCY TO THE CROWN—LIBERAL GRANTS OF MONEY—IMPOSITION OF NEW TAXES—MOTION MADE TO INQUIRE INTO THE ELECTIONS—ATTEMPT MADE TO REMOVE SUNDERLAND AND GODOLPHIN—REFUGEES IN HOLLAND—INVASION OF SCOTLAND BY ARGYLE—MISMANAGEMENT OF THE EXPEDITION—ITS FAILURE—CAPTURE AND EXECUTION OF ARGYLE AND OF RUMBOLD AND AYLOFFE—CRUEL TREATMENT OF THE CLAN CAMPBELL—EXPEDITION OF MONMOUTH—HIS ARRIVAL AT LYME—HIS DECLARATION—HIS POPULARITY IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND—ENCOUNTER OF THE REBELS WITH THE MILITIA—PROCEEDINGS OF THE GOVERNMENT—LOYALTY OF THE PARLIAMENT—RECEPTION OF MONMOUTH AT TAUNTON—HE TAKES THE TITLE OF KING—HIS RECEPTION AT BRIDGEWATER—PREPARATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO OPPOSE HIM—BATTLE OF SEDGEMOOR AND DEFEAT OF THE REBELS—MILITARY EXECUTIONS—CAPTURE OF MONMOUTH—HIS FUSILLANIMOUS BEHAVIOUR—HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE KING—HIS EXECUTION—HIS MEMORY CHERISHED BY THE COMMON PEOPLE—CRUELITIES OF THE SOLDIERS IN THE WEST—THE BLOODY ASSIZES—BRUTAL CONDUCT AND SHOCKING CRUELITIES OF JEFFREYS—RAPACITY OF THE QUEEN AND OF HER LADIES—JEFFREYS MADE LORD CHANCELLOR—CRUEL PERSECUTION OF THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF OORNIH AND OF FERNLEY—ELIZABETH GAUNT BURNED ALIVE—JAMES' PERSISTENT UNCONSTITUTIONAL POLICY—HIS DECLARATION OF LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE REPUBLISHED—THE CLERGY REFUSE TO READ IT IN THE CHURCHES

JAMES succeeded his brother under many disadvantages, so far as his own character was taken into account, but, on the other hand, with a strong feeling throughout the kingdom in favour of regal government. His arbitrary principles had never been concealed, because he viewed the prerogative in the light of a religious ordinance, committed to the sovereign by an authority above all human control, and intrusted to his wisdom for the good of the church and people. Unfortunately, he took upon him to determine, in defiance of the great majority of the nation, what ought to be considered as their greatest benefit in political matters, and also the true faith on which their ecclesiastical constitution should be formed. In the very beginning of his reign he set at nought the authority of Parliament and the feelings of the public, for he exacted the revenue in his own name, though it had expired with the demise of the crown; and went openly to mass adorned with all the ensigns of royalty, though perfectly aware that his subjects entertained the greatest dislike to the popish communion, and, moreover, that the meeting which he attended was positively illegal. But he appeared more accessible than Charles to sentiments of national honour, and even took some steps to assert the pre-eminence to which England was entitled as a leading member of the great European commonwealth. His courage, besides, was well

established; his knowledge and love of maritime affairs had rendered him popular, even when his theological propensities had begun to alienate from him the hearts of the more thoughtful; and his business habits, his industry and perseverance, had gained him the respect of all who enjoyed a near view of his conduct. In the composition of his mind there were the elements of a good private character, steadiness, and conscientious regard to truth, and a great command over his passions; but to these valuable qualities was added so deep an infusion of bigotry and despotism as to render him quite unfit to govern the kingdoms whose reputation and welfare the accident of birth had placed in his hands. Immediately after his accession, however, he acted on maxims of great moderation; retaining in his cabinet the ministers whom the late monarch had employed, and treating them, at the same time, with becoming confidence. The privy seal was intrusted to Clarendon, the brother of his first wife, Rochester was appointed lord treasurer, and thus became prime minister; Halifax, whom James distrusted and disliked, was made to give up the privy seal, and to accept the presidency of the Council, a much less important office, and Sunderland was allowed to remain secretary of State. But though he permitted these noblemen to occupy their official stations, he meant not that the power usually connected with ministerial rank should interfere with his prerogative, or even materially influence the measures of government.

A new reign necessarily required a new Parliament; and unless James had at once announced his intention to rule on despotic principles, he could not avoid assembling the national representatives. Nor, in the present state of parties, had he much to dread from the Opposition, who, on account of the Ryehouse conspiracy, the degraded condition of the corporations, and the increased power of the crown, were stripped of nearly all their influence in the eyes of the people. But James had serious

misgivings about calling a meeting of Parliament, lest such a step should incur the displeasure of the king of France, whose good-will and support he was most anxious to secure. Louis, who well knew that the Whig and Tory members of Parliament were alike jealous of his power and hostile to his designs, had succeeded by alternate bribes and menaces in preventing Charles from convoking the two Houses; and James, who from the first knew that his brother had been the hireling of France, was afraid to give offence to the court of Versailles. He consulted his three confidential counsellors, Rochester, Godolphin, and Sunderland, as to the expediency of convoking the legislature. They proved to him by unanswerable arguments the imperative necessity of this step, and the king in consequence gave public intimation of his intention to follow their advice. He was careful, however, to apologize to the French ambassador for having ventured to take this step without the previous sanction of Louis; and Rochester, after making excuses of a similar character, intimated that James, like his brother, was anxious to be the pensioner of the French king.

Louis had anticipated this wish, for as soon as he heard of the death of Charles he had hastened to send over a special messenger with a large sum of money, which James received with tears of gratitude and delight. In return his three ministers informed Barillon, that their royal master considered that the treaty which England had made with Spain, during the reign of his predecessor, to resist any attempt France might make on the Belgian provinces, was now at an end, and that if the most Christian king should think fit to annex Brabant and Hainault to his empire, he would meet with no opposition from the British government. Lord Churchill, afterwards the famous duke of Marlborough, was sent as ambassador-extraordinary to Versailles, to express the gratitude of the English king for the money which had been so generously bestowed on him. A hint was also given to

the French ambassador, that an additional supply was needed, and would be gratefully received. In consequence, the sum of fifteen hundred thousand livres equivalent to about one hundred and twelve thousand pounds, was remitted to Barillon, with instructions to place at once thirty thousand pounds in the hands of the English ministers for the purpose of bribing the members of the new House of Commons, and to keep the remainder in reserve for some future emergency.

The object of the French monarch was to sow dissension between the English sovereign and his Parliament, and to play off the one against the other, in order that England might be powerless on the continent of Europe. But all the other powers were anxious that James should be on good terms with his Parliament and his people, in the hope that England might regain her old position among the continental monarchies, and take the lead in resisting the grasping ambition of France. Even the pope himself recommended this judicious policy, and warned James against any attempt to promote the interests of the Roman Catholic faith by arbitrary and illegal means. The pride of the new king was hurt by the state of vassalage in which he had hastened to place himself, and he was by no means, like his brother, insensible to the honour and dignity of the country over which he reigned, but he was resolved to make every other consideration subsidiary to the establishment of absolute authority over his own subjects. His foreign policy was therefore made to depend on the success of his home policy. If the nation should peaceably submit to the measures he thought fit to adopt, he was quite prepared to assume an independent position towards the French court. If not, he would be compelled to rely on the assistance of Louis to keep his mutinous people in subjection. At the commencement of his reign it seemed as if his most ardent hopes were about to be gratified. Not a whisper of discontent or opposition was

heard in any quarter. The proclamation of his accession to the throne was everywhere received with apparent satisfaction; enthusiastic addresses poured in from every quarter of the country, from the universities, the inns of court, and all the great commercial societies; and even the public celebration of the Roman Catholic rites in the palace, and the spectacle of high mass performed in Westminster Abbey, failed to damp the enthusiasm of the dominant Tory party. In the midst of this excitement the elections for the new Parliament took place. In the counties the Tory gentry and the clergy, united, returned an overwhelming majority for the government. The reconstituted boroughs followed their example; and the result was that James remarked, that with the exception of about forty members, the House of Commons was just such as he should himself have named.*

Feeling himself thus secure in the support of the Parliament and the country, James lost no time in taking vengeance on the infamous authors and abettors of the popish plot. Bedloe, Dugdale, and Carstairs had gone to their account, but Oates and Dangerfield still remained to suffer the just punishment of their enormous crimes. The former was lying in prison as a debtor for the sum of one hundred thousand pounds, in which he had been amerced as damages in a civil suit for defamatory words uttered against James when duke of York. He was now brought to trial for perjury, and having been found guilty, was sentenced to be stripped of his clerical habit, to stand twice in the pillory, to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate one day, and two days afterwards from Newgate to Tyburn, to be kept a close prisoner during life, and to stand in the pillory on five days every year as long as he lived. This rigorous sentence was executed to the letter. The flogging was inflicted with such merciless severity, that it was evident the court intended that Oates should be scourged to death. On the second day he was unable to stand from

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 328.

the effects of his first flogging, and he was dragged to Tyburn on a sledge. In that state he received no less than seventeen hundred stripes, administered by the hangman with the full strength of his arm. In spite of his stubborn fortitude his bellowings during this torture were frightful to hear. He narrowly escaped with his life, and was consigned, loaded with irons, to the darkest cell of Newgate. Proceedings were next instituted against Dangerfield for a libel on the late and on the present king. He too was convicted, and sentenced to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate, and from Newgate to Tyburn. The wretched criminal sunk under the effect of this flogging, aggravated by a blow on the face by a cane, which he received from a Tory gentleman of Gray's Inn, named Francis, on whom the government and Jeffreys thought it convenient to lay the whole blame of Dangerfield's death. He was tried and executed for murder, though at the worst his crime amounted only to manslaughter.

The House of Commons, which met on the 19th of May, 1685, comprehended, as we have seen, a large proportion of Tories and friends to the established church, who from the natural bias of their political sentiments, were disposed to support the regal authority. They were further encouraged in such views by the celebrated declaration which his Majesty uttered in council, in the course of which he said, "I shall make it my endeavour to preserve this government, both in church and state, as it is now by law established. I know the principles of the Church of England are for monarchy, and the members of it have shown themselves good and loyal subjects; therefore I shall always take care to defend and support it. I know, too, that the laws of England are sufficient to make the king as great a monarch as I can wish; and as I shall never depart from the just rights and prerogatives of the crown, so I shall never invade any man's property. I have often heretofore ventured my life in defence of this nation; and I shall go as

far as any man in preserving it in all its just rights and privileges."*

But, notwithstanding these indications of the prevailing feeling, it would have been impossible for the ablest politician to predict either what course the government might finally be obliged to pursue, or in what its measures would ultimately terminate. It has accordingly been well remarked that, between two persons, one of whom should expect that the country would remain sunk in slavery, the other, that the cause of freedom would revive and triumph, it would be difficult to decide whose reasons were better supported, whose speculations were the more probable. He who desponded must have looked more at the state of the nation, while he who was sanguine must have fixed his eyes more attentively upon him who had just mounted the throne. Upon reviewing the two great parties of the nation, it appears very evident that the great strength of the Whigs consisted in their being able to brand their adversaries as favourers of popery, and that of the Tories, in their finding grounds for representing their antagonists as republicans. From this observation we may draw a further inference that, in proportion to the rashness of the crown in avowing and pressing forward the cause of popery, and of the moderation of the Whigs in adhering to the form of monarchy, would be the chance of the people of England for changing an ignominious despotism for glory, liberty, and happiness†.

The Parliament, who seemed to entertain no doubt of the king's sincerity, were very liberal in their grants, voting to him for life the whole revenue enjoyed by his brother, and overlooking the irregularity of which he was guilty in collecting the revenue without waiting for the vote of the House. To meet the expenditure occasioned by the supply granted to the crown, the decayed state of the navy, and the royal debts,

* Kennet, iii. p. 420.

† Fox, *History of the Early Part of the Reign of James II.*, p. 66.

they imposed several new duties, or added to those with which the country was already chargeable. On one point only did there appear room for discussion. The charters which had been recently granted to the disfranchised corporations were regarded as giving an undue influence to the crown; and hence it became a matter of much importance to ascertain whether the Commons, on the present occasion, were fairly represented. It was maintained that the new charters were illegal, and of course invalid, that the right of election was still vested in those to whom it belonged according to ancient usage, and that no person returned in opposition to a right so well established could be considered a lawful member of the lower House. Sir John Lowther, who spoke at some length on these topics, concluded by moving for a committee to consider the proper method of applying to the king for a remedy, in which he was supported by several individuals of great weight and influence. But this measure, owing to the pressure of public affairs, was allowed to drop; and being, no doubt, disagreeable to his Majesty, it was not afterwards resumed.*

An attempt was at the same time made to enforce the penal laws, the terrors of which had been allowed to slumber during the last five or six years. The House resolved itself into a committee of religion, to consider the best means of providing for the security of "the reformed religion," and unanimously adopted resolutions expressing fervent attachment to the Church of England, and calling upon the king "to put the laws in execution against all dissenters whatsoever from that church." But James instantly summoned some of the leading members to his presence, and expressed great anger at the step thus taken. After a keen debate the House unanimously reversed the decision which they had adopted in committee, and passed a resolution importing that the House

still relied with perfect confidence on the promise of the king to defend the established church, which they did not conceal they held dearer than their lives. The next weapon raised against the government was aimed at the ministers, especially Sunderland and Godolphin. Under pretext of attachment to the royal person, it was moved by a leader of the Opposition, that all who had formerly voted for the exclusion of the duke of York from the throne should, during the present reign, be pronounced incapable of holding any place of trust or emolument. But the object contemplated by this motion was too obvious to deceive any one; and accordingly it met with a resistance so general and determined, that even those in whose councils it originated had not the courage to press it forward.*

Considerable numbers both of English Whigs and Scotch Covenanters had found refuge in Holland, and stimulated alike by public and private wrongs, they now resolved to make an attempt by force of arms to deliver their country from the yoke of arbitrary power. Monmouth, who had been hospitably received by the Prince and Princess of Orange, was living quietly in expectation of being recalled to his native land, when the death of his father, and the accession of his stern and vindictive uncle, extinguished all his hopes. On the day after he received the news he quitted the Hague and retired to Brussels, having pledged his word to the prince that he would not attempt anything against the government of England. But the importunity of the other exiles, especially of a plotting scoundrel named Ferguson, the Judas of Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel," and of Lord Grey of Wark, a man of infamous

* Mr Fox (p. 144) observes "A most curious instance of the circuitous mode and deep devices to which the Whigs, if they wished at this time to oppose the court, were obliged to resort, is a scheme which seems to have been seriously entertained by them, of moving to disqualify from office all persons who had voted for the exclusion. Disqualification from offices which they had no means of obtaining, was to them of no importance, and by obliging the king to remove Godolphin, and more especially Sunderland, they might put the court to considerable difficulties."

* Journals of Commons, May 27, 1685. Barillon, quoted by Mr Fox. Evelyn, vol. iii. p. 160. Burnet, vol. iii. p. 38. Lingard, vol. xiii. p. 28.

character, induced him to give his consent to the scheme of invasion. It was agreed that Monmouth should make a descent on the south or western coast of England, while the exiled earl of Argyle undertook the invasion of Scotland. The Scottish expedition was first ready. On the 2nd of May three ships set sail from Amsterdam, having on board, along with Argyle, a number of other exiles, chief among whom were Sir Patrick Hume and Sir John Cochrane, whose perverse, wrongheaded, and obstinate behaviour contributed not a little to the ruin of the enterprise. After a prosperous voyage they reached the Orkney Islands on the 6th of May, and anchored off Kirkwall. Argyle's secretary and physician having been very imprudently allowed to go on shore, were arrested by Mackenzie, the bishop, who lost no time in sending notice to the government of the arrival of the rebel squadron. Orders were immediately issued to put the country into a state of defence, and to have the militia in readiness. The clans hostile to the Campbells were set in motion. The strongholds in the West Highlands were garrisoned or dismantled, and the chiefs of the clan Campbell were summoned to Edinburgh and thrown into prison.

Meanwhile, Argyle, after having lost three days in a vain attempt to obtain the release of his secretary and his physician, sailed for his own country, where he found his clansmen disheartened and unable to afford him any adequate assistance. At Campbelton, near the southern extremity of Kintyre, he published a manifesto recapitulating his own personal injuries and the grievances of the country, and calling on all true patriots to take up arms for the entire suppression of popery and prelacy. The fiery cross was then sent through the district to summon all the Campbells, from sixteen to sixty, to rally round the standard of their chief. But only about eighteen hundred men appeared at Tarbet, the place of muster, while at least three times that number would have obeyed the summons

if the strength and spirit of the clan had been unbroken.

Inadequate as this force was to overturn the government, the mutual jealousies and contentions which broke out among the leaders would alone have been sufficient to render their efforts abortive. Argyle proposed that they should, in the first instance, take possession of his hereditary mansion, the castle of Inverary, which would form a secure base for their operations, and give his whole clan an opportunity to muster under his banner. But Hume and Cochrane, who pertinaciously thwarted every plan which their leader proposed, insisted that they should at once proceed to rouse the Ayrshire Covenanters. Argyle yielded so far as to allow them to make a descent upon the Lowlands with a part of his forces. But after proceeding as far as Greenock, and finding their hopes of assistance from the Presbyterians of Renfrew and Ayr completely disappointed, they rejoined the earl, who had meanwhile proceeded to the isle of Bute. Difficulties now gathered round them on all sides, aggravated by the violent dissensions which still raged among them. The fort in which their stores were deposited, and their ships, which were moored close under its walls, were captured by some royal frigates. Provisions and ammunition began to fail, and the Highlanders consequently deserted in great numbers. Three superior armies were advancing against them from different quarters, and their affairs were now all but desperate. In this extremity Argyle resolved, in spite of the opposition of his associates, to march on Glasgow; but after reaching the neighbourhood of Dumbarton, they found themselves confronted by a strong body of regular troops and militia. Their men lost heart, and in the course of the night broke up and dispersed. Hume succeeded in once more making his escape to the Continent. Cochrane was betrayed into the hands of the government, and sent up to London. He was condemned to be hanged, but his pardon was

ultimately obtained by the payment of five thousand pounds to the priests of the king.

Argyle himself was taken prisoner at Inchinnan, near Paisley, by a party of militia, and conveyed to Edinburgh Castle (June 20th) The privy council, in accordance with the command of the king, determined not to bring him to a new trial, but to put him to death under his former iniquitous sentence. He conducted himself with remarkable courage and equanimity from the time of his capture till the moment of his death, and expressed his confident expectation that the good cause would ultimately triumph. He was beheaded on the 30th of June at the cross of Edinburgh, and his head was fixed on the top of the Tolbooth.

Rumbold and Ayloff, two Englishmen who had accompanied Argyle in his unfortunate expedition, were also taken prisoners by a party of militia after a desperate resistance, in which Rumbold was mortally wounded. This sincere and resolute republican had originally been an officer in the army of Cromwell. At the Restoration he became a maltster, and was the owner of the building from which the Ryehouse plot took its name. The physicians reported to the privy council, says Fountainhall, that Richard Rumbold "was in hazard of death by his wounds, so the council ordained the criminal court to sit on him the next morning, that he might not prevent his public execution by his death." He was accordingly tried, found guilty, and condemned to be executed within a few hours. Though unable to stand without the support of two men, his fortitude did not fail. He vindicated the part which he had taken in the insurrection as dictated by the sacred duty incumbent upon all freemen to resist oppression and tyranny. He never would believe, he said, that Providence had sent the greater part of mankind into the world with saddles on their backs and bridles in their mouths, and some few ready booted and spurred to ride them. "I desire," he added,

"to bless and magnify God's holy name for this, that I stand here not for any wrong that I have done, but for adhering to his cause in an evil day. If every hair of my head were a life, in this quarrel I would venture them all." On the scaffold, when he began to pray for "the good old cause," the officers commanded the drums to beat, lest the spectators should hear him; the sentence for treason was executed upon him with all its revolting barbarities, and his head was placed on the West Port of Edinburgh.

Colonel Ayloff displayed no less courage, but he had no sympathy with the religious views of the Puritans, and was indeed suspected of infidelity, if not of atheism. When brought as a prisoner to Glasgow he attempted to destroy himself with a penknife; but his wounds, though severe, were not mortal, and he was conveyed to London in the hope that some information might be extracted from him which would criminate others. He was brought before the privy council and interrogated by James himself, but he firmly declined to inform against his associates. "You had better be frank with me," said the king, "you know it is in my power to pardon you." "It may be in your power," was the reply of the undaunted prisoner, "but it is not in your nature." He was executed under his former outlawry, and died with great firmness and composure.

Most shameful cruelties were inflicted on the Campbell clan by the marquis of Athol, the hereditary enemy of their chief. Great numbers were put to death without the form of a trial; more than three hundred of both sexes were transported to the colonies and sold for slaves; and the whole of Argyle's country was laid waste with fire and sword.*

A week before the final dispersion of Argyle's forces, Monmouth landed in the south of England. It had been intended that he should sail six days after the Scottish expedition; but from various causes

* Fox's History. Wodrow, vol. ii. Burnet, vol. vii. Laing, vol. ii.

his departure from the Texel was delayed for nearly a month. On the morning of the 11th of June, the ship in which he had embarked, accompanied by two smaller vessels, reached the Dorsetshire coast, and Monmouth and his small band landed at the little town of Lyme. As soon as he set foot on shore he kneeled down, and returned thanks for his preservation from the perils of the sea. Marching into the town he set up his standard in the market-place, and caused "a declaration," setting forth the objects of the expedition, to be read from the market-place. This document, which was well fitted to inflame the passions of the ignorant multitude, was no doubt drawn up by Ferguson. It was a strange mixture of truth and falsehood. In violent and inflated language it denounced James, to whom it refused the name of king, as a man of immoderate ambition, who was eager to establish arbitrary and tyrannical dominion, and popish idolatry; affirmed that the constitution itself had broken down under the weight of his oppressive administration; that parliaments had been corrupted by him, and the liberties of the people destroyed. But the papers contained other charges most discreditable to those who made them. It charged the duke of York with the burning of London, the shutting up of the Exchequer, the violation of the triple league, the popish plot and the murder of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, the death of Essex in the Tower, and the judicial murder of Lord William Russell, Algernon Sidney, and Sir Thomas Armstrong; and finally, with the poisoning of the late king. For these reasons they proclaimed the duke of York a mortal and bloody enemy, a tyrant, a traitor, a popish usurper, and a murderer; no treaty should be made with him, and the sword should not be sheathed till he had been brought to condign punishment, liberty restored, and the Protestant religion secured. Finally, the paper declared that though the duke of Monmouth could prove that he was born in lawful wedlock, yet for the present he waived his

claims, and would leave his rights to the wisdom and justice of a properly elected and free Parliament.*

Monmouth had expected that the Lords Macclesfield, Brandon, Delamere, and other Whig noblemen and gentlemen, would have joined him, but they all held aloof. The yeomen, the traders of the towns, the artisans, and the peasants, however, were enthusiastic in his behalf. They were strongly imbued with the old republican spirit, they had suffered from the persecutions of the government, they abhorred popery, and they adored Monmouth. In his progress through Somersetshire and Devonshire in 1680, he was magnificently entertained by Thomas Thynne ("Issachar"), at Longleat Hall, as Dryden has described in his "Absalom and Achitophel," and on the road from this splendid mansion to Exeter, where all Devonshire was gathered to welcome him, the hedges were lined with shouting spectators, and the roads were strewn with boughs and flowers. Similar demonstrations were made in the other towns of the district, and many thousands of horsemen turned out to escort him in his triumphal progress through the country. The gentry of the district had now been alienated by the change which took place in public affairs, but the common people were still enthusiastic in Monmouth's cause. They flocked to his standard in such crowds that, in twenty-four hours after he had landed at Lyme, he was at the head of fifteen hundred men.

A detachment of regular troops had been stationed at Bridport, about six miles from Lyme, and Monmouth sent against them a body of about five hundred men, under Lord Grey. An indecisive battle took place, but the advantage on the whole was on the side of the insurgents, though Grey and the cavalry fled in confusion. But this partial success was counterbalanced by a disastrous incident, which lost the duke the services of the best man in his train—Fletcher of Saltoun, who was at once a soldier and a scholar, an orator and

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 641.

a statesman. He had been appointed to command the cavalry under Lord Grey, and when he was ordered to Bridport had, in the exigency of the moment, borrowed a horse belonging to a refugee named Thomas Dags, who had great influence at Taunton. Dare was a man of low mind and coarse manners, and assailed Fletcher with gross abuse for the liberty he had taken; and at last presuming on the patience with which his insolent language had been borne, he struck Fletcher with his cane. The high-spirited Scotchman flew into a violent passion, and drawing a pistol, shot Dare dead on the spot. A great uproar ensued. Dare's followers went in a body to the duke, and demanded vengeance. Monmouth was obliged to dismiss Fletcher, who, overwhelmed with remorse and grief, had left the spot and gone on board the *Helderenbergh* in Lyme harbour. He made his escape to the Continent, and after a series of marvellous adventures he reached Hungary, where he served as a volunteer against the Turks till the Revolution enabled him to return to Scotland.* The loss of such a man, situated as the insurgents were at this moment, was not easily to be repaired.

On the 15th of June, four days after his landing, Monmouth marched from Lyme at the head of four thousand men. His progress was watched by several bodies of militia, who did not, however, venture to attack him. The duke of Albemarle (son of the restorer of the Stewarts), lord-lieutenant of Devonshire, lay at Exeter with four thousand men of the train-bands under his command. On receiving the news of the rising he immediately marched towards Lyme, with the hope that he would be able to crush the insurgents at once. But on reaching Axminster he found them drawn up there to encounter him; and alarmed both by the resolute front which they presented and the spirit which appeared among his own men, he thought it prudent to retreat. The retreat was soon converted into a flight, and the whole country was

strewn with the arms and uniforms which the fugitives had thrown away.

On the 18th, exactly a week after his landing, the duke reached Taunton, where the Protestant dissenters were numerous and influential, and the king and his religion and policy held in abhorrence. His reception by the citizens was flattering in the extreme. All classes welcomed him with the most joyful acclamations, and opened their houses for the reception of his followers. Every house and window was decked with flowers, and no man appeared in the streets without wearing a green bough, Monmouth's badge, in his hat. Twenty-six young maidens of the best families in the town presented him with colours and emblems woven by their own hands, and with a small Bible of great price. The life of the duke had hitherto not been either very moral or devout, but he accepted the sacred volume with a great show of reverence, and said he had come to defend the truths contained in this book, and seal them, if necessary, with his blood.

Almost immediately after landing, Ferguson and Grey had recommended Monmouth to assume the royal title; but in consequence of the opposition of Wade and other republicans among his followers, he had declined to take this step. At Taunton the proposal was renewed, and Monmouth having extorted a reluctant assent from the dissentients, caused himself to be formally proclaimed king on the 20th of June, and issued several proclamations in regal style. The assumption of the royal title, however, did not answer his expectations; it entirely failed to conciliate the Whig lords and gentlemen, while it gave deep offence both to the old Commonwealth men and to the partizans of the Prince of Orange. He had even the folly to proclaim the Parliament then sitting at Westminster an unlawful assembly, and commanded the members to disperse. He also set a price upon the head of James, and forbade the people to pay taxes to the usurper.

The news of Monmouth's landing reached

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 642

London on the morning of the 13th of June. The privy council was instantly summoned. Steps were promptly taken to levy fresh troops. The Parliament voted addresses assuring the king that they would support his cause with life and fortune, and with the utmost speed passed a bill of attainder against Monmouth, for whose apprehension a reward of five thousand pounds was offered. The Commons also authorized the king to raise an extraordinary sum of four hundred thousand pounds for his present necessities. A law reviving that censorship of the press which had terminated in 1679 was passed, and received the royal assent on the 2nd of July, the day on which the Parliament was adjourned.

While the king and the Parliament were thus taking energetic measures against Monmouth and his supporters, the duke was continuing his triumphal march through the western counties. On the 22nd of June he marched from Taunton to Bridgewater, where he was proclaimed a second time, the magistrates in their robes assisting in the ceremony. His followers had now increased to six thousand men, and might easily have been raised to double that number, but for the want of arms. About a thousand of these were cavalry, but their horses were mostly unbroken, and quite unfit for military purposes.

The insurgents advanced from Bridgewater to Glastonbury, thence to Wells, and from Wells to Shepton Mallet. Here the duke formed the resolution to cross the Mendip Hills and seize Bristol, which was held only by a body of the Gloucestershire train-bands, under the duke of Beaufort. If he had advanced at once upon the town, it is not improbable that it might have fallen into his hands. But his sluggish movements gave the royal troops time to assemble, and it was found necessary to abandon the enterprise when the rebel army was within a few miles of the city. Monmouth now resolved to make for Wiltshire, where he was assured he would be joined by such numbers as would make it safe for him to offer battle to the

royal army. He first summoned Bath, which was strongly garrisoned for the king; but the townsmen not only refused to open their gates, but ill-treated his herald. The rebels then wheeled about for Philip's-Norton, where they halted on the evening of the 26th of June. Next morning they were attacked by the advanced guard of the royal army under the duke of Grafton, half-brother of Monmouth; but after a brief though stout conflict the royalists were driven back with the loss of a hundred men killed or wounded, and Grafton himself was nearly taken prisoner.

As soon as the night closed in Monmouth quitted his position and marched southward to Frome, where he hoped to find reinforcements. But the earl of Pembroke, a few days before, had attacked and dispersed a mob of half-armed rustics who had assembled at this place, and had disarmed the inhabitants, so that no recruits were obtained there. Monmouth now began to lose heart. Certain news reached him of the ruin which had overtaken Argyle's expedition. He was aware that strong bodies of the county militia were gathering round him on all sides, and that the royal army, which had now received its artillery, was about to march against him. The proposal was made that he and his chief officers should leave the army to shift for itself, and make their escape to the Continent. This pusillanimous and dishonourable project was seriously entertained by the duke, and discussed with his chief advisers, but the resolute opposition of Grey to this dastardly proposition caused the scheme of flight to be abandoned.

It was necessary, however, to form some plan of operations; and at this juncture a report reached Monmouth that there was a large body of clubmen assembled in the marshes, near Axminster, ready to join him. He resolved, therefore, to retrace his steps to Bridgewater, and to strengthen his forces with these new allies. On the 2nd of July the rebels again entered Bridgewater, and found that the expected reinforcement

amounted to only a hundred and sixty men, while the royal army was ascertained to be close at hand. Wavering and uncertain, the rebel leader at one moment thought of fortifying the town, at another he proposed to retreat by forced marches into the counties of Cheshire and Shropshire. While he was thus hesitating between projects almost equally hopeless, the royal army, consisting of about four thousand men, came in sight on the morning of July 10th, and pitched their tents on the plain of Sedgemoor, about three miles from Bridgewater. A council of war was then held, and it was resolved to make a night attack on the royal forces, the three divisions of which lay encamped in loose order at a considerable distance from one another. At eleven o'clock the duke with his body-guard rode out of the castle, and put himself at the head of the infantry. The command of the horse was still intrusted to Grey, in spite of the remonstrances of Captain Matthews, who reminded Monmouth of that nobleman's misconduct at Bridport. At about one in the morning the rebel forces reached the open moor. They were aware that two broad ditches, or rhines, as they were called, filled with water and soft mud, lay between them and the enemy, and these they passed, though not without some difficulty and delay. But, strange to say, they were ignorant of the fact that the royal encampment was covered by a third ditch called the Bussex Rhine, which at once brought the cavalry to a halt. The royal forces had by this time taken the alarm, and on discovering that a large body of men were advancing through the mist, they fired a volley, which made the undisciplined rebel horse fly in all directions. The waggons who had charge of the ammunition caught the panic, and drove off at full speed. The infantry, however, commanded by Colonel Wade, hastened to the front, but found to their dismay that a broad and deep trench lay between them and the royal camp, which they had hoped to surprise. Halting on the edge of the rhine,

they fired on the enemy on the other side. Part of the royal infantry returned the fire, and for about three quarters of an hour the contest was carried on in this way. Meanwhile, the other divisions of the royal army came up and took part in the battle. Day began to dawn, and the advantage which the rebels hoped to obtain from darkness and surprise was lost. Monmouth, who had up to this time led on his men with great courage and alacrity, saw that the case was hopeless; that his undisciplined half-armed followers, deserted by their horse and the ammunition waggons, could not long sustain the charge of regular troops on an open plain. Instead of manfully standing by the men who were laying down their lives in his cause, he rode off the field with Grey and a few other officers, leaving his deluded followers to their fate. The brave rustics, however, though thus shamefully deserted, made a gallant stand, and repeatedly repulsed the assaults of the regular forces. But their ammunition began to fail, and no supplies could be obtained. The royal artillery came up at this crisis, and opening fire upon the rebel foot, broke their ranks and put them to flight; and the cavalry and infantry, pouring across the ditch, completed their defeat. More than a thousand of them were left on the moor, and about five hundred were made prisoners. The royal army lost three hundred men in killed and wounded.* A considerable number of the prisoners were immediately put to death, and a long line of gibbets, on each of which a rebel was suspended, studded the road from the field of battle to Bridgewater.

Meanwhile, Monmouth, accompanied by Grey and a few other friends, was in full flight from the scene of action, which before six o'clock was left twenty miles behind. He was advised to take refuge in Wales, which would undoubtedly have been his wisest course, but he resolved to make for the New Forest, in Hampshire. On reaching Cranbourne Chase, their horses could

* Burnet, vol. i p. 648. Fox's History. Barillon.

proceed no further. They were therefore turned loose, and the fugitives having disguised themselves in rustic attire, proceeded on foot towards the New Forest. But they were closely pursued, and were soon environed on all sides. On the morning of the 7th, two days after the battle, Grey was captured. On the following morning a German officer named Buyse was discovered, and confessed that he had parted from the duke only a few hours before. The neighbourhood was then thoroughly searched, and before night Monmouth himself, disguised in a shepherd's dress, was found hidden in a ditch, and was conveyed under a strong guard to Ringwood.

On reaching this place the unhappy prisoner wrote an imploring letter to his implacable uncle, expressing in abject terms his remorse for his treason, throwing the blame of his conduct on the "horrid people" who had misled him by their "false arguments," and for whom he now "from the bottom of his heart" cherished the deepest abhorrence, and begging in piteous terms that he might be admitted to the royal presence, as he had a secret to communicate which he could not trust to paper, and which he hoped would secure to his Majesty a long and happy reign. On the following day he wrote to the queen dowager and to the lord treasurer, entreating them to intercede in his behalf.

Monmouth and his associate Grey remained at Ringwood two days, and were then carried up to London under a strong guard. The journey lasted three days. On reaching London the two prisoners were taken direct to Whitehall, and (their arms being pinioned) were introduced separately into the presence of the king. According to the account drawn up from James' own notes, Monmouth threw himself on the ground and abjectly crawled to the king's feet, trying with his pinioned arms to embrace his uncle's knees, and with tears begged for life at any price. Bishop Kennet, who has given a striking account of this interview, says, "This unhappy captive, by

the intercession of the queen dowager, was brought to the king's presence, and fell presently at his feet, and confessed he deserved to die; but conjured him with tears in his eyes not to use him with severity of justice, and to grant him a life which he would be ever ready to sacrifice in his service. He mentioned to him the example of several great princes who had yielded to the impressions of clemency on the like occasions, and who had never afterwards repented of these acts of generosity and mercy, concluding in a most pathetic manner, 'Remember, Sir, I am your brother's son, and if you take my life it is your own blood that you will shed.' The king asked him several questions, and made him sign a declaration that his father had told him that he was never married to his mother; and then said he was sorry indeed for his misfortunes, but his crime was of too great a consequence to be left unpunished, and he must of necessity suffer for it." It has been justly said by Lord Macaulay, that the king cannot be blamed for determining that Monmouth should suffer death. But to see him, and not to spare him, was an outrage on humanity and decency.

Grey was next introduced to his Majesty's presence. He, however, conducted himself with firmness and courage, frankly owned himself guilty, made no apology for his offences, and did not even stoop to ask his life from the king. Both the prisoners were conveyed to the Tower by water, to prevent any attempt at a rescue. The bill of attainder which had been hurried through Parliament in Monmouth's absence was held to supersede the necessity of any kind of trial, and the duke's execution was fixed for the next day but one. He was greatly agitated when this announcement was made to him, and wrote an imploring letter to the king, entreating some respite. But this favour was peremptorily denied by James. The duke had been married when a very young man to the heiress of the Buccleuch estates; but he had deserted her for Henrietta, Baroness Went-

worth of Nettlestede, a young lady of high rank and ample fortune, who was passionately attached to him. His wife, however, was now sent by the king to see him, accompanied by the earl of Clarendon. He received her coldly, and spoke little to her, merely recommending her to bring up their children in the Protestant religion, but implored the intercession of Clarendon in his behalf with the king.

He passed the night of the 14th with Turner, bishop of Ely, and Ken, bishop of Bath and Wells, whom the king had commissioned to offer spiritual counsel and comfort to the unhappy prisoner. At an early hour on the morning of the 15th, the day appointed for his execution, they were joined by Dr. Tennison and Dr. Hooper. None of these divines, as Mr. Fox remarks, "seem to have erred on the side of compassion or complaisance to their illustrious penitent. Besides endeavouring to convince him of the guilt of his connection with Lady Wentworth, which he maintained was blameless in the sight of God,* they seem to have repeatedly teased him with controversy, and to have been far more solicitous to make him profess what they deemed the true creed of the Church of England, than to soften or console his sorrows, or to help him to that composure of mind so necessary for his situation. He declared himself to be a member of their church; but they deemed that he could not be so unless he thoroughly believed the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance. He repented generally of his sins, and especially of his late enterprise; but they insisted that he must repent of it in the way they prescribed to him, that he must own it to have been a wicked resistance to his lawful

* He had been married, he said, when a child. He had never cared for his duchess. The happiness which he had not found at home he had sought in a round of loose amours, condemned by religion and morality. Henrietta had reclaimed him from a life of vice. To her he had been strictly constant. They had by common consent offered up fervent prayers for the divine guidance. After these prayers they had found their affection for each other strengthened, and they could then no longer doubt that in the sight of God they were a wedded pair. Macaulay's History, vol. i. p. 619.

king, and a detestable act of rebellion." The prelates refused to administer the sacrament to the prisoner; and Dr. Tennison, though his exhortations were in a milder tone than theirs, thought like them that he should not be justified in administering the Eucharist to one who persisted in holding such dangerous notions respecting marriage.*

At ten o'clock on the morning of the 15th Monmouth was conveyed in the coach of the lieutenant of the Tower to the place of execution, guarded by a strong body of troops to prevent any attempt at a rescue. He was accompanied at his own request by the two bishops, who warned him that, as in their opinion his expressions of penitence were unsatisfactory, they would repeat their exhortations on the scaffold. All the avenues leading to Tower Hill were guarded with soldiers, whom as he passed along their ranks he saluted with a smile; all the open space and the windows and housetops were crowded with spectators, who listened in silence, broken only by sighs and the noise of weeping, to the last words of one who had been the idol of the people. His first words were, "I shall say little; I come here not to speak but to die. I die a Protestant of the Church of England." Here he was interrupted by one of the bishops, who told him that he could not be a member of their church unless he acknowledged resistance to be sinful; and when he declined to adopt this opinion, they both baited him with arguments and remonstrances. He then went on to speak of Lady Henrietta, whom he affirmed to be a woman of virtue and honour. He loved her to the last, and he could not die without expressing his affection for her. On this Gosling, one of the sheriffs, rudely interrupted him, and said he hoped to have heard of his penitence for his treason. "I die very penitent," was Monmouth's reply. The bishops again interfered, and insisted on his making particular acknowledgment and confession. He referred them to a

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 645. Kennet, vol. iii. 482.

paper he had signed in the Tower; but they reminded him there was nothing in that paper about non-resistance, and earnestly pressed him to own that doctrine. Worn out with their unseasonable and inhuman importunities, he said to one of them, "I am come to die. Pray, my lord! I refer to my paper." Even this affecting appeal did not procure the victim relief from their ill-judged importunities; though from their well-known principles for which they suffered ejection from their sees, after the Revolution, the prelates no doubt thought it their duty to press upon him this favourite dogma. When urged to call his expedition rebellion, he said, "Call it by what name you please, I am sorry for invading the kingdom. I am sorry for the blood that has been shed, and for the souls that have been lost by my means. I am sorry it ever happened." The prelates prayed with him long and fervently, and he joined in their devotions, and when they repeated, twice over, the words in the Liturgy, "God save the king," he, after a pause, said "Amen." He then began to undress himself for the block, the bishops meanwhile urging him to address the soldiers, and to entreat them and the people to be loyal and obedient to the king. "I have told you I will make no speeches," he exclaimed in a hasty tone. "I will make no speeches, I come to die." "Only ten words, my lord," said one of the bishops. Monmouth turned away, called his servant, and putting into his hand a toothpick case, said, "Give it to that person"—Lady Wentworth. He then accosted the executioner, whose name was Jack Ketch, and said, "Here are six guineas for you. Do not hack me as you did my Lord Russell. My servant will give you some more gold if you do the work well." He felt the edge of the axe, expressed some fears that it was not sharp enough, and laid his head on the block. The executioner, who was probably discomposed by the duke's warning, trembled so much that the first blow he struck inflicted only a slight wound. The victim, lifting up his head, looked him full in the face,

and then resumed his kneeling posture. Two additional blows were struck, but still the neck was not severed. The shouts of rage and horror which the scene elicited from the crowd still more unmanned the wretched hangman, and he flung down the axe with a curse, exclaiming, "I cannot do it; my heart fails me." The threats of the sheriff compelled Ketch to take up the axe again, and with two other strokes the head was severed from the body. When the bloody work was finished the executioner had to be conveyed away under a strong guard, to protect him from the mob, who would otherwise have torn him in pieces. The body of the luckless duke was interred in St Peter's chapel in the Tower. Many of the spectators dipped their handkerchiefs in his blood, regarding him as a martyr for the Protestant religion; and his memory was long and affectionately cherished by the common people, especially in the western districts of the country.

It was generally expected that the execution of Grey would follow that of Monmouth, but James in his letter to the Prince of Orange, giving an account of his interview with Monmouth, states that Grey's "execution cannot be so soon by reason of some forms which are requisite to be complied with." What these "forms" were it is impossible to tell, but in the end Grey obtained a respite. This marked exception to the general rule of the king was due to the fact, that the court could gain nothing by Grey's death, as he had only a life interest in his property, and could forfeit no more interest than he had. His estate, which was large, was strictly entailed, and on his death would at once have devolved on his brother, He was therefore "given," as the phrase then went, to the Lord-treasurer Rochester, one of the brothers of James' first wife, who obtained from him a bond for forty thousand pounds as the price of his life, and some of the other courtiers obtained smaller sums. "He was likewise obliged," says Burnet, "to tell all he knew, and to be a witness in order to the conviction of others,

but with this assurance that nobody should die upon his evidence.”*

While the citizens of London were occupied with the trial and execution of Monmouth, the district which had been the scene of his rebellion was given up to the tender mercies of a ferocious soldiery. Feversham had been called up to the court, and was rewarded with thanks and honours for a victory which was in no way due to him. He had left in command at Bridgewater Colonel Kirke, a military adventurer who had for some years commanded the garrison at Tangiers, where he had rendered himself infamous for his cruelty, licentiousness, and rapacity. On the abandonment of that fortress he had returned to England, but still continued in the command of his old regiment. As they had been enlisted for the purpose of waging war against the Infidels, they bore on their flag the Paschal Lamb. Hence, in bitter irony, the people of Somersetshire named these rude and ferocious plunderers “Kirke’s lambs.” On leaving Bridgewater for Taunton, Kirke was accompanied by a large body of prisoners, chained two and two, and by two carts filled with those whose wounds had not been dressed, and who were unable to go on foot. On reaching Taunton a number of these were hanged without the form of a trial, on the sign-post of the White Hart Inn, before the eyes of the officers of the Tangier regiment, who were meanwhile carousing in the inn, and making merry at the agonies of the dying men. Kirke himself made the drums strike up while the limbs of the poor wretches were quivering in the air, saying he would give the rebels music to their dancing. The executioner who quartered the dead bodies stood ankle-deep in blood, and the neighbouring villages were covered with their heads and limbs. Kirke’s love of money, however, somewhat controlled his love of blood, and not a few of the more wealthy prisoners purchased from him a safe-conduct, by which they were enabled to make their escape to a foreign country.

* Burnet, vol. 1 p. 646.

The cruelty and illegality of Kirke’s proceedings were notorious in London, yet the king, through Lord Sunderland, informed him that he was “very well satisfied with his proceedings.” But as soon as information reached the court of the lenity Kirke had shown to rich delinquents, Sunderland was commanded to express his Majesty’s dissatisfaction; and on the 10th of August he was recalled from the west, leaving the jails crowded with thousands of captives. The saintly Bishop Ken, though he had no sympathy with the religious and political opinions of the rebels, did all in his power to obtain some mitigation of their sufferings, and retrenched from his own expenses that he might be able to make some addition to their coarse and scanty fare.

The vengeance of the court was still unsatisfied, but it was now resolved to proceed against the adherents of Monmouth in a more regular way. The chief-justice, who had recently been raised to the peerage under the title of Baron Jeffreys of Wem, accompanied by four other judges, set out early in September on that circuit, of which it has been justly said by a great writer, “the memory will last as long as our race and language.” An order was issued in the king’s name to the officers in command of the troops in the west, “to furnish such parties of horse and foot as might be required by the lord chief-justice on his circuit for securing prisoners.” In consequence of his thus having the soldiers at his command, it was said in bitter jest that the chief-justice had been made a lieutenant-general; and from the whole character of the circuit it was nick-named “Jeffreys’ campaign”—a name which James himself had the folly and the brutality to give it repeatedly in his letters to the Prince of Orange. Jeffreys commenced his campaign at Winchester with the trial of Alice Lisle, the widow of John Lisle, one of the members of the high court of justice which tried Charles I, and who after the Restoration had been murdered by some royalist assassins at Lausanne. This lady, it was

well known, did not share in her husband's political opinions, but "had been a favourer of the king's friends in their greatest extremities during the late civil war;" she had shed bitter tears for the execution of Charles, and had protected and relieved many cavaliers in their distress. She was charged with having given shelter to two fugitives from Sedgemoor, John Hickes, a nonconformist divine, and Richard Nelthorpe, a lawyer—"an office of humanity," says Sir James Macintosh, "which then was, and still is, treated as high treason by the law of England." But this law, odious and severe as it is, was strained for the destruction of this kind lady. "She could not, according to the doctrine laid down by the highest authority, be convicted till after the conviction of the rebels whom she had harboured." She was, however, brought to the bar before either Hickes or Nelthorpe had been tried. She was not allowed the assistance of counsel, and she was so deaf that she could very imperfectly hear the evidence brought against her. She declared in her defence that though she knew that Hickes was in trouble when she took him in, she did not know or suspect that he had been concerned in the rebellion, but supposed that he was merely flying from the warrants out against him as a nonconformist minister. The witnesses who gave testimony in her behalf, were browbeaten and bullied by Jeffreys in the most brutal manner. One of them was so overwhelmed by the threats and oaths and curses which the judge heaped upon him, that he was almost scared out of his senses, and could only stammer out a few unmeaning words. Jeffreys summed up in the same style, pouring out for an hour maledictions on Whigs and Presbyterians, and misleading the jury as to the law of the case. After long deliberation the jury, whose delay had roused the indignation of the judge, returned into court to say that they had doubts whether the prisoner really knew that Hickes had been among the insurgents. The chief-justice assured them that

the proof was complete. After a second and a third consultation they were still unsatisfied; but alarmed by an angry expostulation from Jeffreys, and a threat that if they did not immediately come to a decision he would adjourn the court and lock them up all night, they at last brought in a reluctant verdict of guilty.

On the following morning sentence was pronounced, and Jeffreys condemned the aged lady to be burned alive that very afternoon; but on the interposition of the clergy of Winchester Cathedral he consented to give a respite for four days. During this interval earnest intercession was made to the king by ladies of high rank and other powerful friends. Feversham, who was promised a thousand pounds if he could procure a remission of Mrs Lisle's sentence, pleaded on her behalf, Clarendon, the king's brother-in-law, too, supported the petition for mercy. But the heart of the king was as hard as the nether millstone, and he declared to Feversham that he would not reprieve her for one day. The only favour that could be obtained was, that she should be beheaded instead of being burned alive. The venerable matron was accordingly put to death on a scaffold in the market-place of Winchester, and laid her head on the block as calmly as if it had been her pillow.*

From Winchester Jeffreys proceeded to Dorchester, the principal town of the county in which Monmouth had landed. At this juncture he was rewarded for his services by his appointment to the office of lord-chancellor, which had been promised him before he set out on his campaign. More than three hundred prisoners were to be tried; but he contrived to save time and to lighten his labour, by letting it be known that the only chance of obtaining a pardon or a respite was to plead guilty. About thirty, who disregarded this warning and stood their trial, were convicted and hanged at once. The greater part of the remainder took fright and pleaded guilty. Two hun-

* Trial of Alice Lisle. State Trials.

dred and ninety-two were condemned to death, and seventy-four were executed.

Jeffreys next proceeded to Exeter, where but a limited number had been concerned in the rising, and only a few comparatively were put to death. But the most frightful vengeance was inflicted on Somersetshire, which had been the chief seat of the rebellion. Nearly eleven hundred prisoners were arraigned for treason; one thousand and forty pleaded guilty; and not less than two hundred and thirty-three were in a few days hanged, drawn, and quartered in this county. In order to diffuse more widely the terror caused by these executions, they were spread over thirty-six towns and villages. Dead bodies hung in chains, or head and limbs stuck on poles, were to be seen in the most conspicuous places in the streets, beside the highways, over the town-halls, and even over the very churches. "Nothing could be liker hell than these parts," says the author of the "Bloody Assizes." "Cauldrons hissing, carcases boiling, pitch and tar sparkling and glowing, bloody limbs boiling, and tearing, and mangling." "England was now an Acedama," says Oldmixon, another contemporary writer; "the country for sixty miles together, from Bristol to Exeter, had a new and terrible sort of sign-posts and signs—gibbets, and heads, and quarters of its slaughtered inhabitants." "All the high roads of the country were no longer to be travelled while the horrors of so many quarters of men, and the offensive stench of them, lasted." *

In the midst of these butcheries the chief-justice, though grievously tormented by the stone, was all himself. "His spirits rose higher and higher as the work went on. He laughed, shouted, joked, and swore in such a way, that many thought him drunk from morning to night." But it is significantly added, "In him it was not easy to distinguish the madness produced by evil passions from the madness produced by brandy." He boasted that he had

hanged more traitors than all the other judges since the Conquest. And it has with equal truth been added, that the number of persons whom he executed in one month and in one shire, very much exceeded the number of all the political offenders who have been executed in our island since the Revolution.

The minor punishments inflicted on those who escaped the gallows, were noted for the same merciless severity. A woman, for some idle words, was sentenced to be whipped through all the market towns in the county of Dorset. A lad named Tutchin, who was found guilty of uttering some seditious language, was condemned to be imprisoned seven years, and during that period to be flogged through every market town in Dorsetshire every year. Eight hundred and forty of the prisoners sentenced to transportation were distributed into gangs, and bestowed on persons who enjoyed favour at court. According to Jeffreys they were worth from ten to fifteen pounds a piece. The conditions of the gift were, that the convicts should be sold as slaves, that they should not be emancipated for ten years, and that the place of their banishment should be some West India island, where, as the king must have known, field labour was death to Europeans. These exiles suffered the most dreadful hardships in the course of their voyage, packed as they were in the holds of small vessels so closely, that they could not all lie down at once without lying on one another. The coarse and scanty food, fetid water, foul air, darkness, stench, and sickness, proved so fatal, that more than one-fifth of the number perished on the voyage, and the survivors were landed in such a state that the persons to whom they had been consigned found it necessary to fatten them before exposing them for sale.

The rapacity of the chief-justice was hardly less notorious than his cruelty. He drove a lucrative trade in pardons, and obtained large sums of money from the Whig gentry whose lives were spared. A

* Lord Lonsdale's Memoirs.

gentleman named Edmund Prideaux, who was arrested and thrown into prison by an arbitrary warrant upon mere suspicion, after a long confinement was at length fain to redeem his life at the price of fifteen thousand pounds. This large sum was paid to Jeffreys, who purchased with it an estate which was popularly designated *Aceldama*—the Field of Blood. Hampden, who was still in prison for a misdemeanour, paid six thousand pounds to escape the new and capital charge of treason. This money was divided between Jeffreys and Father Petre, the king's confessor. The queen even took part in this vile traffic, and solicited and obtained a gift of a hundred of the rebels who were sentenced to transportation. She must have cleared at least a thousand pounds on the cargo. Her maids of honour displayed the same rapacity and hard heartedness as their mistress. The young girls who had presented the standard to Monmouth at Taunton, were given up to the tender mercies of these ladies, who demanded from their parents the sum of seven thousand pounds, as the price of their pardon, but were at last forced to content themselves with about a third of that sum. The suspicions of the court were strongly directed against the Whig noblemen, the Lord Gerard of Brandon, eldest son of the earl of Macclesfield, Lord Delamere, and the earl of Stamford; and in consequence of some statements made by the infamous Lord Grey, proceedings were instituted against them for high treason. A conviction was obtained against Gerard by the evidence of perjured witnesses; but he obtained a reprieve through the influence of his sister-in-law, who was a favourite at court, and ultimately, after the lapse of two years, he was released on payment of a large sum of money. Delamere was tried, but acquitted, to the great indignation of the king. The indictment against the earl of Stamford had been removed into the House of Lords during the session of Parliament, and was put off in consequence of the prorogation. As it could not be prosecuted till

the Parliament should assemble, the trial was postponed for an indefinite period, and the earl soon regained his liberty.

It has been pleaded by some of the apologists of James, that he was not fully cognizant of the cruel and rapacious proceedings of his chief-justice; and James himself, after his expulsion from the throne, was anxious to have it believed that unmerited obloquy had been brought upon him by the brutal conduct of Jeffreys, for which he was not responsible. But the plea is quite inadmissible. It is asserted by Burnet that the king had a particular account of the proceedings on the "Bloody Assize" sent to him every day, and the letters of Jeffreys prove that this was the case. In one of these letters indeed, the chief-justice returns thanks for his Majesty's gracious acceptance of his services in the west, and on his return from his "campaign" he was cordially welcomed by his master; the great seal was placed in his hands, and in the next *London Gazette* it was notified that this high office was conferred upon him as the reward of his many eminent and faithful services to the crown. When some months later Jeffreys, in consequence of a prolonged debauch, had brought on a serious illness, James expressed great concern, and declared that such another man could not easily be found in England. Burnet mentions that, in his drawing-room and at his table, the king took pleasure in relating to foreign ministers the particulars of this campaign, speaking of all that was done in a style that neither became the majesty nor the humanity of a great prince, and the historian adds that Dykvelt the Dutch ambassador afterwards told him, "that the king talked so often of these things in his hearing that he wondered to see him break out in these indecencies."*

The proceedings in London under the eye of the king, afford indisputable evidence of his cordial approbation of the conduct of his chief-justice. Whenever any case was directly referred to James, he manifested

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 648

the most inflexible severity Two brothers of the name of Hewling, mere lads, had been implicated in the rebellion, and were tried and condemned by Jeffreys, who behaved to them with his usual brutality, telling them that their grandfather Kiffen, who was one of the first merchants in London, deserved to be hanged as richly as they. The elder, a handsome and accomplished youth, only nineteen years of age, suffered death with such calmness and fortitude that even the soldiers were melted at the sight. Earnest efforts were made to obtain a pardon for his brother, and his sister went to London with a petition for mercy While waiting in the antechamber at Whitehall for admission to the royal presence, Lord Churchill, who was standing near the chimney-piece, said, "Madam, I wish well to your suit with all my heart, but I dare not flatter you with any hopes, for that marble is as capable of feeling compassion as the king's heart." The prediction proved true James was inexorable, and the younger Hewling followed his brother to the scaffold, and died with the same dauntless courage

There were even worse cases than this Henry Cornish, a London alderman who had filled the office of sheriff at the time of the Exclusion bill, was specially obnoxious to the court. He was now brought to trial at the Old Bailey, on the charge of having been an accomplice in the Rye-house Plot His trial was hurried on with such indecent haste that he had no time to prepare his defence The only evidence against him was that of Rumsey and Goodenough, two perjured scoundrels who had shown themselves ready to swear any thing, and who confessed that they had been implicated in the plot with which they charged Cornish. It was also shown that Goodenough was actuated by personal enmity to the prisoner But these things were urged in vain. Cornish was found guilty, and within little more than a week of his arrest he was hanged within sight of the Guildhall, and almost before his own door.

The crowning atrocity of this time, however, was the execution of John Fernley and Elizabeth Gaunt, for the crime of harbouring a rebel named Burton. This man was concerned in the Rye-house Plot, but made his escape to Holland by the assistance of Elizabeth Gaunt, a benevolent matron of the Baptist persuasion. After living some time on the Continent, Burton returned to England with Monmouth, and fought at Sedgemoor He made his escape from that field, and found his way to London, where he took refuge in the house of John Fernley, a barber, in Whitechapel. Fernley was a very poor man, and at this time was pressed by his creditors; but he nobly resisted the temptation of a reward of one hundred pounds which the government had offered for the apprehension of Burton The traitor, however, was aware that he could purchase his own pardon by betraying his generous host; and he delivered himself up to the government, and gave information against both Fernley and Elizabeth Gaunt They were immediately arrested, tried, and convicted on the evidence of this execrable villain James obstinately refused to show them any mercy, and Fernley was hanged, and Elizabeth Gaunt burnt alive at Tyburn, on the same day on which Cornish was executed in Cheapside. She submitted to her cruel sentence with the greatest composure and courage "My fault," she said, "was one which a prince might well have forgiven I did but relieve a poor family, and lo! I must die for it" With her own hands she calmly arranged the straw and other combustible materials around her, so as to shorten her sufferings. Among the weeping spectators was William Penn, the Quaker, who afterwards gave a description of the scene. While this foul judicial murder was perpetrating, a violent tempest burst forth, which wrecked many ships and overthrew a number of houses, a testimony from heaven, as it was then commonly thought, against this shocking crime.*

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 649.

Hitherto the fortune of the king had been so propitious, that every attempt made to overthrow his power had only strengthened the foundation of his throne, and placed his authority on a firmer basis. Even before his accession, the designs of his enemies were attended with a similar effect. The plot matured under the auspices of Russell and Sydney brought much popularity to his cause, removing the chief obstacles which impeded his way to the supreme authority; and now the defeat of the rebels in the north, as well as in the south, suppressed for a time the seditious projects of the malcontents, whether religious or political. But James, in the very moment of victory, prepared with his own hand the means of his ultimate discomfiture and disgrace. He was not satisfied with the power which the law allowed, though sufficient, as he himself had acknowledged, to make him as great a monarch as he could wish; and in endeavouring to wield his sceptre in defiance of the statute-book, he sacrificed all the advantages which his birth and the course of events had secured to him. He endeavoured to attain three objects which at that period were considered inconsistent with the principles of the constitution—the formation of a standing army, the abolition of the Test Act, and a repeal or modification of the law of Habeas Corpus. The militia, he maintained, was a species of force quite unsuitable even for the purpose of national defence; and he felt that, so long as the test should be allowed to exclude Roman Catholic officers from his service, the military establishment could not be employed by him with confidence for realizing his meditated innovations in church and state. But neither his council, nor the more moderate of the Roman Catholics, approved of measures so likely to incense the nation, and produce against themselves a tremendous reaction. Even the pope himself recommended James to follow a moderate and constitutional policy. The great body of the English people, sincerely attached to the Protestant faith, became alarmed, and

anticipated the most frightful consequences. They were not ignorant that the king had so far despised their principles, their prejudices, and their fears, as to attend mass in the most public manner; that he had condescended to become a pensioner of Louis, the French despot, who had just revoked the Edict of Nantes; and that there was reason to apprehend the existence of a confederacy, of which these monarchs were the head, for reviving the domination of popery throughout the whole of western Europe.

During the prevalence of this excitement Parliament again assembled, when his Majesty, in his speech, made an attempt to apologize for employing officers in the army who had not taken the test, and expressed a hope that so trifling a circumstance would produce no dissension between himself and the two Houses. The sentiments of the Commons did not respond to this affected tone of moderation. They did not conceal from the king their uneasiness at the exercise of a dispensing power which he had assumed contrary to law; and while they offered to relieve the individuals so employed from the penalties they had incurred, they pressed him to issue orders for their immediate discharge. The Lords soon entered into the same views, in pursuing which they derived much aid from the eloquence of Compton, bishop of London, who stated that he uttered the unanimous opinion of the episcopal bench, when he pronounced the test to be the chief security of the established church, and that in their opinion and in his own the whole civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the country was endangered by the measures of the court. James, whose obstinacy usually increased in proportion to the obstacles which he had to encounter, instead of yielding to the judgment of the two Houses thus clearly expressed, resolved to dismiss them by a prorogation, and to follow out his intentions by the sole aid of his prerogative. It was on this occasion that Mr. Coke, Tory member for Derby, made use of the memorable words, for which indeed he was sent to the

Tower, "I hope we are all Englishmen, and not to be frightened from our duty by a few hard words." Halifax had shortly before been expelled from office, and now the members who had voted against the court were dismissed from the public service; and the bishop of London was not only deprived of his office of dean of the chapel royal, but his name was struck out of the list of privy councillors.

This spirited conduct on the part of the legislature led to a marked division in the cabinet. Rochester, who with his adherents represented the Protestant interest, laboured to dissuade the king from the policy he had hitherto pursued in favour of the Roman Catholics, and to detach him from his alliance with Louis, whose ambitious views still menaced the independence of all the neighbouring nations. His views were supported by his elder brother, the earl of Clarendon, by the marquess of Ormond, by the whole body of the Tory churchmen, and by the earl of Powis, Lord Bellasay, and other respectable Roman Catholic noblemen and gentlemen. Sunderland, on the other hand, who now showed a marked leaning to the Romish church, encouraged his master to proceed boldly and steadily in the path on which he had entered, avoiding all connection with foreign alliances, more especially such as were formed with the intention of opposing the plans of the French monarch, and was supported by a few popish adventurers of broken fortune and tainted reputation, like Lord Castlemaine, Henry Jermyn, Lord Dover, and Richard Talbot, Lord Tyrconnel, backed by France and by the Jesuits. Their advice, which was much more agreeable to the obstinate and imperious nature of the king, was preferred; and the court of Paris, touched with a feeling of gratitude to the wily minister, conferred on him an annuity of four thousand five hundred pounds, besides other benefactions which were not less valuable in amount.

His Majesty began the second year of

his reign by employing his dispensing power in behalf of the Roman Catholics; suspending the statutes passed during the reign of the late king, by issuing patents under the great seal. Four of the judges—all four violent Tories, and some of them implicated with Jeffreys in the Bloody Assizes—informed him that they could not support his claims. Jones, the chief justice, a servile drudge of the court, on being told plainly that he must either decide for the prerogative or give up his place, answered, "For my place I care little. I am old and worn out in the service of the Crown; but I am mortified to find that your Majesty thinks me capable of giving a judgment which none but an ignorant or a dishonest man could give." "I am determined," said the king, "to have twelve judges who will be all of my mind as to this matter." "Your Majesty," answered Jones, "may find twelve judges of your mind, but hardly twelve lawyers." He was dismissed, together with Montague, chief baron of the Exchequer, and two puisne judges, Neville and Charlton. After the bench had thus been packed for the purpose, the question was brought to a hearing, and the legality of the dispensing power, after some discussion, was confirmed by the judges, on the ground that it belongs to the royal prerogative to dispense with penal laws on particular occasions and for necessary reasons. To bring the question to a practical issue, the coachman of Sir Edward Hales received instructions to institute an action against his master for the penalty of five hundred pounds, for holding the commission of colonel in the army without having qualified according to the Test Act. Sir Edward pleaded in his defence a dispensation granted to him under the great seal, an argument which was held good by the Lord Chief-justice Herbert, whose opinion was opposed by one only of his eleven colleagues on the bench. The single dissident was Baron Street, a man of a notoriously bad character, who, there can be no doubt, was ordered to give his vote against the prerogative, to

exhibit an appearance of independence in the court.

Incapable of receiving either warning or instruction from the signs of the times, which spoke a language hardly to be misunderstood, James persevered in his dispensations, so as to encourage apostasy from the established church, and to discountenance all those whose adherence to it gave him offence. Several popish chapels were opened in the metropolis, though the exercise of the Romish form of worship was still prohibited by law. A fraternity of Carmelites fixed themselves in the city, a body of Franciscans took their station in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; a community of Benedictine monks sat down near St James', and the Jesuits opened a large school in the Savoy. At length he resolved to introduce papists into the privy council; and in virtue of his dispensing power he ordered the Lords Powis, Arundel, Bellasyse, and Dover to take their places at the board without submitting to the usual qualification. Powis and Bellasyse, who belonged to the moderate party among the Roman Catholics, accepted with reluctance the honour conferred on them; but Arundel and Dover, who were connected with the jesuitical cabal, cordially approved of the king's policy.

It was resolved by James to adopt a similar policy in Scotland, and as the Estates of that kingdom had shown the most slavish subservience to his will, he anticipated no opposition to his schemes. A royal letter was accordingly sent down to the privy council, authorizing Roman Catholics to hold public offices without taking the test. The clergy were enjoined not to preach against popery, because to do so was insulting to the king's religion. The booksellers were forbidden to publish any work without the chancellor's license; and their shops were searched, and all publications on the errors of Romanism were seized and committed to the flames. Crowds of popish priests flocked to Scotland from the Continent. A college of Jesuits was estab-

lished in the palace of Holyrood for the gratuitous instruction of youth; a cargo of images, beads, crosses, and censers arrived at Leith directed to the chancellor, Lord Perth; and though the importation of such articles was illegal, they were allowed to pass the custom-house unchallenged. The celebration of mass in the chancellor's house, which speedily followed, excited great commotion in Edinburgh. The mob rose and fiercely attacked the mansion in which the obnoxious rites were celebrated. In the end the troops were called out to quell the riot, and were pelted with stones by the populace. A number of the citizens were killed by the fire of the soldiers, and several of the rioters were hanged; but public sympathy was strongly manifested in their behalf, and the chancellor and his master were held in universal detestation.

An attempt was made by the chancellor and his brother Melfort to throw the blame of these riotous proceedings on their rival the duke of Queensberry, the lord treasurer. The duke had for some years earned the favour of James by his combined servility and his cruelty to the Covenanters, but he was a zealous Protestant, and had refused to assist the king in his attacks on the established church. He had therefore forfeited the royal confidence, and his place in the royal councils was taken by the chancellor and Melfort the secretary, who had succeeded in supplanting their rival by apostatizing from the Protestant religion and embracing the Romish faith. They had the audacious baseness to declare that their conversion was owing to the papers found in the strong box of Charles II., a plea which proved a sure passport to the favour of the king. They were invested with the supreme power of the government, while Queensberry was dismissed from the office of treasurer, and reduced to the inferior position of president of the council. He was at the same time deprived of the situation of governor of Edinburgh Castle, which was conferred upon the duke of Gordon, a Roman Catholic.

The object of James, as he explained in a letter which he wrote to the privy council at this time, was to obtain for the Romanists exemption from civil penalties and disabilities on account of their religious opinions, but that the Covenanters should still be exposed to the vengeance of the law. The members of council, however, expressed great reluctance to comply with this monstrous demand; and when the Estates assembled on the 29th of April, 1686, they proved equally refractory. Even the Lords of the Articles, who were virtually selected by the king, and were composed of privy councillors and courtiers, could not be induced to go farther to meet his wishes than to propose that Roman Catholics should be permitted to conduct their religious services in private houses without incurring any penalty; and it was doubtful whether the Estates would consent to pass even this measure, far short as it came of the king's demands and expectations. The commissioner in despair adjourned the Parliament, which was soon after dissolved by the king. James was exceedingly provoked at this unexpected opposition from such a quarter, and lost no time in visiting his wrath on those who had either opposed his scheme or failed to give it hearty support. Some of the refractory courtiers he warned and menaced, others he punished by the withdrawal of their pensions or by dismissal from the privy council. The archbishop of Glasgow and the bishop of Glasgow were both arbitrarily ejected from their sees. Lord Pitmedin, the only judge who opposed the repeal of the penal laws, was removed from the bench; and even Sir George Mackenzie the lord-advocate, who had been the willing tool of the court in the cruel persecution of the Covenanters, was deprived of his office.

If James had not been utterly blind to the signs of the times, these events would have shown him the perilous nature of the policy he was pursuing; but warnings and expostulations were alike thrown away on the wrong-headed and obstinate bigot. He

had only been too gracious, he said, when he condescended to ask the assent of the Scottish Parliament to his wishes. He was now resolved to employ his prerogative, both to dispense with the penal laws affecting the Roman Catholics, and to punish those who had presumed to thwart his schemes. Queensberry was stripped of all his employments, and eleven members of the privy council were dismissed from office, and their places at the board were filled by papists. The burghs, as a punishment for the opposition of their representatives to the policy of the court, were deprived of their privileges by the simple mandate of their sovereign. The annual election of magistrates and councillors was prohibited; the king assumed to himself the right of nominating the provosts, and they in turn appointed the other magistrates and the town council; so that the choice both of the municipal office-bearers and of their representatives in Parliament was virtually vested in the crown.

Having thus prepared the way for, the exercise of the dispensing power, James intimated to the remodelled council that the Roman Catholics should now be relieved from the penalties which the law denounced against them; that they were at liberty to accept all offices and benefices which he might think fit to bestow upon them; and that the judges and magistrates should refrain from executing the laws against them, on pain of his high displeasure. He also announced his intention to fit up a Roman Catholic chapel in Holyrood, for the public celebration of divine service according to the Romish ritual. And all this he declared was done by his own absolute power. The obsequious council readily adopted a resolution proposed by Perth, expressing in the most servile terms their assent to these unconstitutional injunctions.

In order to conceal his real design in removing the disabilities of the Roman Catholics, James at the same time granted a partial indulgence to the moderate Presbyterians and to the Quakers, but re-enacted the former severe laws against

conventicles. Barillon, the French ambassador, mentions that at this time the king felt that he could not abolish the restrictions on the members of his own church, and yet maintain them against the Protestant dissenters; but he was desirous, if possible, to extend his favour and protection only to the Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians, leaving the other sects under the operation of the penal laws. He found this impracticable, however; but his first proclamation showed that his hatred of the Presbyterians burned as fiercely as ever. The Roman Catholics were allowed to build chapels, and even to carry the Host in procession anywhere, except in the high streets of royal burghs; but the Presbyterians were forbidden to worship anywhere but in private houses, and were informed that if they ventured to hold meetings in the open air, the law which punished this offence with death would be strictly enforced. James soon found it necessary, however, to make other and more liberal concessions to the Protestant nonconformists, and in April, 1687, he published his "Declaration for Liberty of Conscience," in which additional indulgences were granted. And this was followed in July by another proclamation, abolishing all penalties and disabilities on account of nonconformity, and all restrictions on religious services, except field meetings.*

Some of the more moderate presbyterian party, worn out by long-continued persecution, and ignorant of the king's designs, availed themselves of the indulgence, and a few even expressed their gratitude to the king in a letter, dated at Edinburgh, 21st July, 1687. But the more rigid class, the descendants of the old Protesters, refused to accept the toleration thus gratuitously and insidiously presented to them. They declared that the sole design of it was to introduce popery; they expressed their abhorrence of that absolute power by which the monarch took upon himself to dispense with the fundamental laws of the kingdom; and condemned in the

strongest terms their less honest or less courageous brethren, who had consented to enjoy the privileges of the indulgence. No one can doubt that this conduct on the part of the Cameronians was in perfect harmony with their principles, to which they had steadfastly adhered throughout, and for which, as it was made evident, they were still willing to lay down their lives. It was at this period that James Renwick, one of the most zealous and courageous of the Cameronian preachers, suffered martyrdom at the cross of Edinburgh, February 11, 1688, in the twenty-sixth year of his age.

Renwick was the last Protestant martyr that suffered in Scotland. During the twenty-eight years that the persecution lasted it is computed that no fewer than eighteen thousand persons suffered death or some other form of penal infliction on account of their religion. Nearly two thousand were banished to the Plantations, of whom considerable numbers perished on the voyage by shipwreck or cruel treatment. About three thousand suffered imprisonment in loathsome dungeons, and not a few were subjected to the most cruel tortures. About seven thousand sought refuge in other countries. Six hundred and eighty were killed in the encounters with the soldiers, and nearly four hundred were murdered under forms of law. Besides all these, great numbers were reduced to a state of abject misery, and multitudes perished through cold, hunger, and fatigue, while wandering on the mountains and moors, or hiding in caves and in the recesses of the mountains and morasses of the country.

James soon made it evident that the dispensing power which the servile judges of the King's Bench had recognized, was not to remain dormant. Heneage Finch, the solicitor-general, had been turned out of office on account of his refusal to defend the prerogative. The attorney-general, Sawyer, though deeply implicated in the arbitrary proceedings of the court,

* Wodrow, vol. ii. p. 417; Burnet, vol. iii. p. 138.

and stained with the blood of Russell and Sydney, also positively refused to draw warrants authorizing Roman Catholics to hold benefices in the Church of England. But as the government could not find a competent person at the moment to replace him, Sawyer was permitted in the meantime to retain his office, and Powis, the new solicitor, was intrusted with the odious work. Selater, a clergyman of the established church who at this time apostatized, and went to mass only seven days after he had administered the sacrament to his parishioners according to the rites of the Protestant religion, was authorized by the royal dispensation to retain the emoluments of his benefices. The next avowed pervert was Obadiah Walker, an aged clergyman, master of University College, Oxford. He, too, was authorized by the warrant of the king to retain his office. An oratory was immediately erected, and mass publicly celebrated in the college. A Jesuit was appointed chaplain, and a printing press was established under royal license for the printing of treatises in defence of the Roman Catholic faith. The deanery of Christchurch, which became vacant at this time, was conferred upon a Roman Catholic, named Massey,* who had not one single recommendation for that important office, except his faith. The sees of York, Oxford, and Chester had recently become vacant. The bishopric of Oxford was conferred upon a worthless sycophant, named Samuel Parker, who was a papist at heart. "I wished," said the king to the papal nuncio, "to appoint an avowed Catholic, but the time is not come. Parker is well inclined to us; he is one of us in feeling, and by degrees he will bring round his clergy." The see of Chester, vacant by the death of the great scholar and divine, Bishop Pearson, was given to Thomas Cartwright, "a still viler sycophant than Parker." The archbishopric of York re-

* A few weeks after the Revolution this man, who was a disgrace to both churches, made a public recantation of popery, with abundance of tears, and was restored to the bosom of the English church.

mained vacant for several years, with the object, it was universally believed, of its being ultimately bestowed on Father Petre, the king's confessor.

James did not make any secret of his intention to use his ecclesiastical supremacy for the overthrow of the established church and the re-establishment of popery in his dominions, but there was no legal machinery existing by means of which he could carry out his claim of supremacy over the church. The High Court of Commission had been abolished by the Long Parliament, and it was not merely not re-enacted after the Restoration, but the Parliament had declared in the most emphatic terms, that this obnoxious court was completely abrogated. James, however, now resolved, in direct defiance of two Acts of Parliament, to create a new court of High Commission, to which he intrusted complete authority, not only over the church, but over all colleges and grammar-schools, with full powers to eject from office any clergyman or teacher who might be brought to their bar, and even to condemn any recusant to deprivation of all civil rights, and imprisonment for life. The commission was presided over by the lord chancellor, Jeffreys, and the other commissioners were Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, who, however, declined to serve on the plea of business and ill health, Crewe, bishop of Durham, Sprat, bishop of Rochester; the lord treasurer, Rochester; Sunderland, the lord president, and Herbert, the chief-justice of the King's Bench.*

The institution of this illegal and arbitrary tribunal excited great alarm throughout the country, and especially in the church, which its proceedings were not calculated to allay. As soon as it was opened, Compton, bishop of London, a son of that marquis of Northampton who had laid down his life for the royal cause in the great civil war, was cited

* History of King James' Ecclesiastical Commission, referred to by Lingard Evelyn, vol. iii. p. 218. State Trials, vol. xi. p. 1156.

before the new tribunal. The king had thought fit to issue an injunction to the clergy of the established church, that they should abstain from touching in the pulpit on the points of difference between Roman Catholics and Protestants. The injustice of forbidding the clergymen of the national church to explain and vindicate their principles against the open and continued attacks of the Romanists, roused the spirit even of the submissive and servile clerical order. Sherlock, the master of the Temple, who had written with severity against Whigs and dissenters, now directed his eloquence against the Romish ordinances of the faith, and was in consequence severely reprimanded, and deprived of a pension which he held, and Sharp, dean of Norwich and rector of St. Giles' in the Fields, one of the royal chaplains and a keen Tory, delivered a discourse against the pretensions of Rome, for the purpose of removing the difficulties of one of his parishioners, who had been staggered by the reasonings of some Romish writers, and had sent an anonymous letter to his rector stating his difficulties and perplexities. The king was greatly exasperated at this courageous proceeding on the part of one of his own chaplains, and Sunderland was instructed to order the bishop of London to suspend Sharp till the royal pleasure should be further made known. The bishop was already under the ban of the court for his conduct in the House of Lords, and was unwilling to aggravate the royal displeasure against him; but he was reluctant to perform a judicial act which he was assured by the best advisers was illegal, and which he knew to be also unjust. He accordingly stated his scruples and difficulties to the king in most respectful and, indeed, humble terms. The rage of James knew no bounds. The court of High Commission, which had for some time been meditated, was at once constituted, and the bishop was brought to its bar. He was brow-beaten and insulted by Jeffreys in his usual manner; and though he made

it evident that he had done only what he was bound in law to do, he was suspended from all his spiritual functions, and the charge of his diocese was intrusted to Sprat and Crewe, two of his judges. These proceedings, combined with the vaunting display of the rites of the Romish church, and the increase of Roman Catholic chapels and convents both in London and throughout the country, produced great excitement among the populace, and led to serious riots in the city, and in Bristol, Coventry, Worcester, and other towns. The trade of the country was seriously injured, and the revenue drawn from the port of London was considerably diminished. But none of these considerations had any effect upon the resolution of the king. To show his determination to carry out his own schemes, he formed a camp on Hounslow Heath, and collected there about thirteen thousand men, with twenty-six pieces of artillery, for the purpose of overawing the refractory citizens of the capital.

The Anglican clergy, though they had no sympathy with liberal opinions, and indeed, as a body, zealously inculcated the doctrine of passive obedience as a grand distinguishing tenet of their church, could not see without anxiety and alarm the efforts made to propagate a faith hostile to their own religious belief and to the best interests of the country. They had recourse to weapons which they were well qualified to wield with effect, and under the leadership of Stillingfleet, Tillotson, Sherlock, Atterbury, and other divines of great ability and learning, they opened a formidable battery on the Romish church. In every part of the country the pulpits resounded with fulminations against the errors of popery. Tracts of every variety, popular, witty, learned, argumentative, issued by thousands from the presses of the capital and of the two universities, with whose privileges the censorship could not interfere. "The pretensions of the Holy See, the authority of tradition, purgatory, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, the adoration of the

Host, the denial of the cup to the laity, confession, penance, indulgences, extreme unction, the invocation of saints, the adoration of images, the celibacy of the clergy, the monastic vows, the practice of celebrating public worship in a tongue unknown to the multitude, the corruptions of the court of Rome, the history of the Reformation, the characters of the chief reformers, were copiously discussed. Great numbers of absurd legends about miracles wrought by saints and relics were translated from the Italian, and published as specimens of the priestcraft by which the greater part of Christendom had been fooled. Of the tracts put forth by Anglican divines during the short reign of James II many have probably perished. Those which may still be found in our great libraries make up a mass of nearly twenty thousand pages."

The Roman Catholics made a vigorous but unavailing struggle to keep the field. They were completely overmatched by their Anglican opponents. Hundreds of theological tracts were, indeed, issued from an office which the king had opened in London, and from Obadiah Walker's press in Oxford; but they were vastly inferior both in thought and diction to the treatises of the Protestant controversialists, with whom the victory undeniably rests. But James was proof against all argument, and allowed the remonstrances and wise counsels even of his best friends to pass over unheeded. "The king openly expresses his joy," wrote Barillon, "at finding himself in a situation to strike bold strokes. He likes to be complimented on this subject. He has talked to me about it, and has assured me that he will not flinch."

Ireland, however, was the field on which James looked for the most speedy and triumphant success. The Irish statute-book at this time imposed no penalties upon Roman Catholics, and they were not, as in England, excluded from office or from Parliament by any sacramental test. The native Irish, however, who had for the most part adhered to the Church of Rome, were

in virtue of their race, though not of their faith, trodden down and oppressed by the English settlers, who had obtained possession of a large portion of the estates of the native chieftains, and monopolized the power and privileges of the government. These Saxon colonists were vastly superior to the Celtic race in energy, intelligence, and organization; and therefore naturally and necessarily wielded "the supremacy of wealth over poverty, of knowledge over ignorance, of civilized over uncivilized man." James, however, formed the preposterous design to reverse their relative position—to place the powers of the government in the hands of the Roman Catholics, and not only to wrest the confiscated estates from their English possessors, and to restore them to their ancient owners, but to employ the native Irish as his instruments for establishing arbitrary rule in England. In pursuance of this insane and wicked scheme the duke of Ormond, the lord-lieutenant, a nobleman of high character and influence, and a staunch Protestant, was recalled, the earl of Clarendon, the brother of the king's first wife, was appointed viceroy in his room, but the whole power of the administration was intrusted to Lord Tyrconnel, the commander of the forces in Ireland. Tyrconnel was an adventurer of the worst class. He had in his youth been a hanger-on of the court, a noted sharper and bully, and was commonly known by the name of "Lying Dick Talbot." He at one time laid a plan for the murder of the duke of Ormond, who narrowly escaped the plot. In spite of his infamous character Talbot was a favourite both with Charles and James, and had rendered to the latter services which no honourable man would have stooped to receive. He was a man of violent passions, and was notorious for his foul language and his cursing and swearing, as well as for his drunkenness and licentiousness. He owed his earldom and his post as commander of the troops to James, who now meditated bestowing even greater honours and power on his insolent and reckless favourite. On

whom he knew that he could place entire reliance in carrying out his plans. Clarendon soon found, to his bitter mortification, that he was only the nominal head of the government, and that its affairs were really under the direction of the popish junto at Whitehall, and especially of Tyrconnel. He was curtly informed that the king intended without delay to bring a large number of Roman Catholics into office, and to make a complete change both in the civil and the military government of Ireland. Many of the best officers of the army, who had fought bravely for the royal cause in the civil war, were arbitrarily deprived of their commissions and of their bread, and their places were filled by men utterly incompetent for the office, but whose religion covered all their deficiencies. Many hundreds of the common soldiers were also discharged, and their successors were chosen exclusively from the native and Roman Catholic population. No Protestant was suffered to enlist, and it became evident that it was the intention of Tyrconnel to exclude every man of the Protestant faith and the English race from the army.

Meanwhile the jesuitical cabal were using every effort to bring about the expulsion from office of Clarendon's younger brother, Lord Rochester, the high treasurer. James, who had a personal liking for his brother-in-law, to whom he was indebted for many important services, was willing to retain him in his high position if he would conform to the Romish church. But Rochester, though he stooped to the employment of mean and degrading artifices to prop up his falling power, and even pretended to be in doubt on the subject, and borrowed popish books from the king, and listened with apparent interest to the arguments of popish divines, was not willing to abjure his religion. He was in consequence dismissed from office in January, 1687, and his brother Lord Clarendon was immediately after removed from the viceroyship of Ireland, which was conferred upon his enemy, Lord Tyrconnel. At the same time the privy

seal was given to Lord Arundel of Wardour, a Roman Catholic. Bellasyse, another Roman Catholic, was made first lord of the Treasury, while the dissolute Jermyn, Lord Dover, who had no one qualification for office but his creed, obtained a seat at the board. The ejection of the Hydes, the relatives and old friends of the king, solely on account of their religion, and the substitution of incapable and inexperienced papists in their room, made it clear that it was neither toleration nor equality, but supremacy, that James sought and was determined to obtain for the members of his own church. From this time forward the leaders of the Church of England, who had been most conspicuous for their loyalty and for the sacrifices they had made in behalf of the royal cause, began to be alienated from the throne, and to contemplate the possibility of a change in the reigning dynasty.

It had now become evident to all men that the adoption of the Romish faith was the only secure road to royal favour and preferment, and the needy and unprincipled court parasites hastened to recommend themselves by apostasy to the patronage of the king. The earls of Peterborough and Salisbury, Wycherley, a licentious dramatist, Tindal, a writer of infidel pamphlets, Hanes, a comedian of most infamous character, and above all, John Dryden, the illustrious poet, at this period renounced Protestantism, and were received into the bosom of the popish church. The greater part of these renegades, however, did little credit to the cause which they espoused, and could afford but little assistance to the king in carrying out his cherished schemes. James now saw that he must look for help in another quarter. He had throughout cherished a bitter hatred against the English Puritans and the Scotch Covenanters, and had enforced the penal laws against both with merciless severity, and even yet he was most reluctant to grant them any relief. His original purpose had been to procure an indulgence for the members of his own church, along with an ample share of

ecclesiastical and academical endowments, but at the same time to continue his cruel persecution of the dissenters. But now, irritated at the obstinate refusal of the Anglican leaders, both lay and clerical, to support his policy, he turned to the Puritans for aid, and made earnest efforts to conciliate them. On the 4th of April, 1687, he issued his memorable Declaration of Indulgence, suspending by his own authority all penal laws against all classes of nonconformists, and authorizing both Roman Catholics and Protestant dissenters to perform their worship publicly. He at the same time, and by the same authority, annulled all those statutes which imposed any religious test as a qualification for any civil or military office.

The Anglicans were greatly alarmed, as they had good reason to be, at this policy. While they could not but feel strong resentment against the monarch who had so ungratefully requited their devotion to his cause, and their sacrifices and sufferings for his family, they were well aware that they deserved no favour at the hands of the dissenters, whom in the day of their triumph at the Restoration, they had trampled on with equal insolence and cruelty. The cup of suffering which they had mingled for others, was now about to be returned to their own lips. They had sown the wind, and were about to reap the whirlwind. "They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brethren, in that we saw the anguish of their souls when they besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." They did not, however, regard with hopeless despair this new and unexpected danger that threatened them. They courted the dissenters with the utmost assiduity; attempted to throw upon the king the whole blame of the harshness and severity with which nonconformists had been treated, protested that any share they had taken in this treatment had arisen solely from deference to the royal authority; and declared that if the dissenters would only stand by

the English church in this hour of trial, their fidelity and generosity should be recompensed by the aid of the church to procure for them a legal indulgence, it might be even admission to the communion and privileges of the establishment on equitable and liberal terms. James, on his part, affirmed that he had been obliged to persecute the nonconformists in order to conciliate the clergy; and that some of their leaders had even offered to relax the penal laws against the Roman Catholics, on condition that they should still be strictly executed against the Puritans, and to prove the sincerity of his new-born esteem for the Protestant dissenters, he offered municipal honours to some of their leaders, and invited them to Whitehall, where they were treated with marked courtesy by himself and his courtiers. A number of those who had been implicated in the Ryehouse Plot or in the rebellion of Monmouth were pardoned, and recalled from exile or from banishment to the Plantations. The celebrated Richard Baxter, who had been tried for sedition shortly after the accession of James, had been brutally insulted by Jeffreys, as his manner was, convicted by a packed jury, and condemned to a heavy fine and imprisonment, was now set at liberty, and informed that if he chose to take up his residence in London, he might do so without any apprehension that the Five Mile Act would be enforced against him. The illustrious John Howe, who, while the fires of persecution burned fiercely against his brethren, had taken refuge in Holland, was now allowed to return to England. John Bunyan, who had passed twelve years in confinement, was now at length permitted to preach openly, without hindrance or molestation. The court was most anxious to conciliate William Kiffin, an eminent London merchant as well as a preacher, and a man of the greatest influence among the Baptists, the grandfather of the two gallant youths, the Hewlings, who had been the most lamented victims of the Bloody Assizes, for whose execution James was personally re-

sponsible * Kiffen was commanded to attend at the palace; and James, whom he found surrounded by a brilliant circle of courtiers, received him with marked courtesy, and informed him that his name had been put down as an alderman in the new charter. The venerable nonconformist looked fixedly at the king, burst into tears, and said "Sire, I am a very old man, and have withdrawn myself from all kinds of business for some years past, and am incapable of doing any service in such an office to your Majesty or the city; besides, sire," he continued, "the death of my grandsons gave a wound to my heart which is still bleeding, and never will close but in the grave." James stood for an instant confused and silent, and then said "Mr Kiffen, I shall find a balsam for that sore." Lord Macaulay has justly remarked on this scene, that though the king did not mean to say anything cruel or insolent, no speech that is recorded of him gives so unfavourable a notion of his character as these few words. They are the words of a hard-hearted and low-minded man, unable to conceive any laceration of the affections for which a place or a pension would not be a full compensation †

The artifices and cajoleries of the king and courtiers seem at first to have made the dissenters waver. They owed nothing to the English church, which had now for more than a quarter of a century been their bitter and relentless adversary, and had undoubtedly been mainly instrumental in procuring the enactment of the numerous penal statutes from which they had so long suffered. On the other hand, the king offered them immediate relief from all their legal disabilities, and entire freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. It is not much to be wondered at that a section of the nonconformists, headed by Vincent Alsop, Stephen Lobb, Thomas Rosewell, Henry Cave, and some other preachers and pamphleteers,

who had been conspicuous for their violence and the lengths to which they had gone in opposition to the government, now went over to the side of the court, and sent up fulsome addresses of thanks to the king for the benefits conferred on them by the Indulgence; but the great body of the Protestant nonconformists, headed by Baxter, Howe, Bunyan, and other illustrious ornaments of their body, steadfastly resisted the temptation held out to them, and refused to accept of a boon which they regarded, with justice, as a delusion and a snare. They were aware that, whatever show of liberty he might find it convenient to assume, the maxims of his religion as well as the temper of his mind were decidedly opposed to the principles of a real toleration. They declined therefore to return thanks for a boon which they well knew was, in the eye of the law, a nullity, and to recognize a claim of authority which violated the fundamental principles of the constitution. The influence of William Penn, the Quaker courtier, whom James had gained over to his views, completely failed to shake their resolution. Many of them not only opposed the king's claim to dispense with the laws, but through fear of popery resisted the repeal of the Test Act, choosing rather themselves to suffer exclusion from civil offices than to open a door for the admission of papists.

James was extremely anxious to obtain for his policy the approbation of his son-in-law, the Prince of Orange; but to his bitter mortification William declared to one of the king's agents, who urged upon him the duty of complying with the royal wishes, that he could not with a safe conscience do it. "And I will not," he added, "no, not for the crown of England, nor for the empire of the world." * James wrote urgent letters with his own hand, expostulating with the prince and entreating his assent, promising even that if he would only give way the English government would in return co-operate with him strenuously against France, but William was inflexible;

* See ante, p. 800

† Kiffen's Life. Wilson's Dissenting Churches, vol. i. pp. 403-405. Macaulay's History, vol. ii. p. 228.

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 698.

and he and the princess jointly expressed their regret at the course which his Majesty had adopted, and respectfully advised him to govern according to law.

The prince must, indeed, have seen by this time that a great crisis was impending in England, and he now took measures to bring about cordial co-operation among the various parties who were looking to him for deliverance. Early in the spring of 1687 he despatched to England the celebrated diplomatist Dykvelt on a special mission, with credentials from the States-general. The real object of his embassy, however, was to open communications with the Opposition, and he played his part with rare ability and dexterity. He informed the friends of the established church, that the prince was favourable to Episcopacy and the Book of Common Prayer. He hinted to the nonconformists that they might expect from him, not only toleration, but a liberal measure of comprehension, and he gained over not a few of the Roman Catholics by the assurance, that the prince was anxious that they should be relieved in a legal manner from all penal statutes. The heads of the Tory party, Danby and Nottingham, and Halifax, the chief of the trimmers, held frequent conferences in the presence of the dexterous envoy with the Whig leaders, Edward Russell, nephew of the duke of Bedford, Bishop Compton, Admiral Herbert, Lord Churchill, and other popular leaders, and concerted the measures which they should unitedly take in defence of the constitution. Through the influence of Lady Churchill the Princess Anne was kept faithful to the party of the prince, her brother-in-law, and to her religion, and she sent notice to William that she was fully resolved, by God's help, rather to lose her life than to be guilty of apostasy from the faith she had professed.

The zeal of James in behalf of the Romish faith reached its height in the summer of 1687. He seemed anxious to atone, by his increased activity in the support of his church, for the scandalous life which

he was still leading.* Although by an Act of Parliament all intercourse with the Romish see had been declared high treason, Ferdinand, count of Adda, had for some time resided as papal nuncio at the English court. He had lately been raised to the episcopal dignity as archbishop of Amasia, a city of Pontus; and James insisted that he should be publicly consecrated in the royal chapel. In the evening of the day on which the ceremony was performed, Adda was received in his archiepiscopal vestments in the queen's apartments; and James, in the presence of the court, prostrated himself before the popish prelate and implored his blessing. The nuncio had hitherto discharged his official duties in a private manner, but the king was now determined that he should go to court in solemn procession, and be publicly received as an ambassador from the Roman pontiff. It was arranged that the ceremony should take place at Windsor Castle on the 3rd of July, and the duke of Somerset—the second temporal peer of the realm, commonly known as the Proud Duke—received orders to be in attendance to introduce the nuncio. He at once firmly declined to swell the pomp of a papal dignity. James expostulated with him on his refusal. "I thought, my lord," he said, "that I was doing you a great honour in appointing you to escort the minister of the first of all crowned heads." "Sir," said the duke, "I am advised that I cannot obey your Majesty without breaking the law." "I will make you fear me as well as the law," angrily replied the king. "Do you not know that I am above the law?" "Your Majesty may be," rejoined the duke, "but I am not." He was immediately de-

* The principal mistress of James at this time was Catherine Sedley, daughter of the notorious profligate Sir Charles Sedley, and he caused great scandal by creating her Countess of Dorchester. The queen was roused to fury by the licentious conduct of her husband, and said to him, "You are ready to put your kingdom to hazard for the sake of your soul, and yet you are throwing away your soul for the sake of that creature." Catherine Sedley was clever and witty, but like all James' mistresses, very plain. Charles used to say that he supposed they had been assigned to his brother by his confessor, by way of penance.

prived of his regiment, and dismissed from his office as one of the lords of the king's bedchamber.*

The ceremony took place at Windsor, and was performed with extraordinary pomp and splendour. The nuncio, clothed in purple, with a brilliant cross on his breast, was seated in a royal carriage and accompanied by the duke of Grafton, one of the illegitimate sons of Charles II. The procession was headed by the knight-marshal's men on horseback, and by twelve footmen, "their coats being all of a dark gray-coloured cloth, with white and purple lace," and it was closed by the equipages of the ministers of State and principal courtiers, including those of Crewe, bishop of Durham, and Cartwright, bishop of Chester. The train consisted altogether of thirty-six carriages, with six horses each. James and his queen, seated upon two chairs under a canopy in St George's Hall, received the papal emissary with great reverence. The multitude of visitors who crowded the town were shocked at the spectacle, and the indignation of the inhabitants rose to such a height that, on the celebration of mass in Wolsey's Chapel, they attacked and wrecked the building.

The rash proceedings of James were condemned even by the papal court, which was at that time in a state of war with the Jesuits, the king's chief advisers. The earl of Castlemaine, the husband of one of Charles' mistresses, had been despatched to Rome as ambassador from the English court. The sending of such a man as an embassy to a pontiff so austere in his manners and morals as Innocent XI. was regarded as little better than an affront, and the pope, who thoroughly disapproved of the whole domestic and foreign policy of James, was at no pains to conceal his contempt for the English ambassador. Castlemaine had been instructed to ask a cardinal's hat for Father Petre; but the pope after evading the request for some time, at length, when it was pressed with great heat and

want of temper by the ambassador, returned a peremptory and by no means courteous refusal. Mortified at this repulse, James resolved to make Petre a privy councillor, an appointment which greatly aggravated the public indignation at his reception of the nuncio. On the 4th of June, the very day succeeding that event, the Parliament, which in spite of its obsequiousness had failed to give satisfaction to the court, was dissolved by royal proclamation.

The court of High Commission had hitherto contented themselves with suspending the clergymen, who incurred their displeasure, from their spiritual functions, but it was now resolved by the king to attack the rights of property and the independence of the universities. The law expressly provided that no person should be admitted to a degree in either university, without taking the oath of supremacy and the oath of obedience. Nevertheless, James sent a mandate to Cambridge, directing that Alban Francis, a Benedictine monk, should be created a Master of Arts. He refused, however, to take the oaths, and the university authorities having in vain submitted an humble explanation to the king, declined to obey the mandate. The vice-chancellor and the Senate were in consequence cited to appear before the new High Commission Court at Westminster on the 21st of April, 1687. On the day appointed, Dr. John Peachell, who then held the office of vice-chancellor, accompanied by eight representatives of the Senate, including the illustrious Isaac Newton, then a Fellow of Trinity and professor of mathematics, answered the summons. On their appearance before the Board, Jeffreys refused to listen to a word in vindication of their proceedings, and browbeat and insulted them in his usual brutal and insolent style. Peachell, who was a weak and timid man, was scared into silence, and when the other academicians attempted to speak, they were imperiously ordered to hold their peace. Peachell was deprived of his office, and suspended from all his

* *Memoirs of the Duke of Somerset*

emoluments, and the delegates of the Senate were dismissed by the chancellor with the words, "Go your way and sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you"*

The proceedings at Oxford were still more outrageous. The presidency of Magdalene College became vacant at this time. It was an office of great dignity and influence, as well as of large emoluments. The members of this college had always been conspicuous for their loyalty, and had in consequence been ejected from their dwellings and deprived of their revenues at the close of the great civil war. A considerable number of them had even volunteered to take up arms for the crown during the recent rebellion, and might therefore have counted on the royal protection. But James was as insensible to the dictates of gratitude as to the obligations of law and justice. The election of the president was by the statutes vested in the Fellows, but their choice was restricted to persons who were, or had been, Fellows of their own society or of New College. In some few instances, royal letters of recommendation had been sent and obeyed, but always in favour of persons who were legally eligible to the office.

On the present occasion, however, James thought fit to nominate for the vacant place one Anthony Farmer, a man of infamous character and a recent convert to popery. The Fellows sent a most humble letter to the king, entreating that if his Majesty thought fit to recommend any candidate to their attention, he would be pleased to nominate a person for whom they could legally and conscientiously vote. In the hope that the king might be moved by this remonstrance, they postponed the election to the 13th of April, the last day on which it could legally take place. The day arrived, but no answer had been received from the crown, and not the slightest notice had been taken of their dutiful representation. Two or three of the seniors proposed that the election should be still farther de-

layed; but the great majority were of the opinion that they were bound by their oaths and the statutes of the founder to proceed. Their choice fell on John Hough, a man of high reputation, whose firmness in resisting the unconstitutional mandates of his sovereign, and in defending the rights of his college, has won for him a lasting renown.

James was of course indignant at the conduct of the Fellows, and refused to listen to the explanations which the duke of Ormond, the chancellor of the University, and the bishop of Winchester, the visitor of Magdalene College, offered on their behalf. Early in June, they were summoned to appear before the commission to answer for their conduct. Jeffreys insulted and badgered the deputation sent to represent the college, after his accustomed manner. One of the deputies, named Dr Fairfax, mildly raised the question of the validity of the commission. "Who is this man?" bellowed the chancellor. "Pray, what commission has he to be impudent in court? This man ought to be kept in a dark room. Why do you suffer him to be without a guardian? He is under my care as a lunatic. I wonder nobody has applied to me for the custody of him. Pray, let the officers seize him." Hough's election was pronounced void, and Fairfax was suspended from his fellowship, but the disclosures made respecting the moral character of Farmer, the king's nominee, were of such a nature that even the commissioners, shameless as they were, felt that his nomination was too outrageous to be any further pressed.

In the month of August Parker, bishop of Oxford, was recommended to the Fellows by the king. This notorious prelate was a mean parasite, and all but an avowed papist. He had never been a Fellow of either New College or Magdalene, and was therefore legally ineligible. Besides, there was no vacancy, since Hough had been chosen in strict accordance with the statutes of the college, and the members of the college were bound by their oaths to maintain the validity of his election. They therefore

* State Trials, vol. iv. p. 250.

represented to his Majesty in most dutiful and humble terms, that it was impossible for them to comply with his mandate. Before carrying matters to extremity, however, James resolved to try the effect of a personal interview with the refractory members of the college. In the month of August he commenced a progress through the country, visiting the principal towns, and partaking of the hospitality of the leading nobles and gentry. Leaving Windsor on the 16th, he proceeded first to Portsmouth and Southampton, then to Bath, Gloucester, Worcester, Ludlow, and Chester, and was everywhere received with the outward tokens of respect and loyalty, which he regarded as evidences of the popularity of his policy. From Cheshire he directed his course towards Oxford, which he reached on the 3rd of September. On the following day the Fellows of Magdalen College were ordered to wait on him, evidently under the impression that, however refractory they had hitherto shown themselves, they would not dare to refuse obedience to a command uttered by his own lips. When they appeared before him, he treated them in a manner not worthy either of his own position or their character. Addressing their spokesman he said, "What's your name? Are you Dr Pudsey?" "Yes, may it please your Majesty." "Did you receive my letter?" asked the king. "Yes, sir, we did." "Then," was the rejoinder, "you have not dealt with me like gentlemen: you have done very uncivilly by me and undutifully."

"Then they all kneeled down and Dr Pudsey offered a petition containing the reasons of their proceedings, which his Majesty refused to receive, and said, 'You have been a stubborn and turbulent college. I have known you to be so this twenty-six years. You have affronted me in this. Is this your Church of England loyalty? One would wonder to find so many Church of England men in such a business. Go back, and show yourselves good members of the Church of England. Get ye gone; know

I am your king, and I command you to be gone. Go and admit the bishop of Oxon, head-principal—(what do you call it?) of your college.' One standing by said 'President.' 'I mean president of the college,' said the king. 'Let him know that refuses it. Look to 't. They shall find the weight of their sovereign's displeasure.' The Fellows went away, and being gone out were recalled.

"The king said, 'I hear you have admitted a Fellow of your college since ye received my inhibition. Is this true? Have you not admitted Mr Houlden Fellow?' 'I think he was admitted Fellow,' said Dr Pudsey, 'but we conceive'—The Dr hesitating, another said, 'May it please your Majesty, there was no new election or admission since your Majesty's inhibition, but only the consummation of a former election. We always elect to one year's probation; then the person elected is received or rejected for ever.' 'The consummation of a former election!' exclaimed James, 'it was downright disobedience, and is a fresh aggravation. Get you gone home, and immediately repair to your chapel and elect the bishop of Oxon, or else you must expect to feel the heavy hand of an angry king.' The Fellows then offered the petition again upon their knees. 'Get ye gone,' said the king; 'I will receive nothing from you till you have obeyed me, and elected the bishop of Oxford.'

"Upon which they went directly to their chapel, and Dr Pudsey proposing whether they would obey the king and elect the bishop, they answered, every one in his order they were always willing to obey his Majesty in all things that lay in their power, as any of the rest of his Majesty's subjects; but the electing of the bishop of Oxford being directly contrary to their statutes, and to the positive oath they had taken, they could not apprehend it in their power to obey him in this matter. Only Mr Dobson, who had publicly prayed for Dr Hough, the undoubted president, answered doubtingly he was ready to obey in every

thing he could; and Mr Carrochci, a papist, that he was for obeying in that"*.

James was greatly disappointed and mortified at this result. He had confidently expected that the expression of his displeasure would at once have brought the Fellows to submission, and now that his threats had failed to move them, he seems to have been somewhat at a loss what course to pursue. Retreat seemed not only humiliating, but dangerous, while perseverance in the path on which he had rashly entered seemed fraught with still more perilous consequences. In this dilemma William Penn was employed as a mediator. He had accompanied the king in his progress, and now "earnestly pressed the king to let the business of Oxford fall, for he said it would prejudice his designs and purposes more than his declaration had advanced them"† James was, however, as usual, obstinately bent on carrying out his views, and Penn used his influence to induce the Fellows to comply with the royal wishes. But intimidation, blandishments, and promises of reward if they would yield, proved equally powerless. The Fellows wanted nothing from the crown, they said, but common justice. "We stand," said Hough, "on our statutes and on our oaths; but even setting aside our statutes and oaths, we feel that we have our religion to defend. The papists have robbed us of University College. They have robbed us of Christ Church. The fight is now for Magdalene. They will soon have all the rest."

Since the Fellows would not yield, the king determined to make them feel the full weight of his displeasure. In the month of October a special commission, consisting of Cartwright, bishop of Chester, Wright, chief-justice of the King's Bench, and Sir Thomas Jenner, was sent to Oxford, with visitatorial powers over Magdalene College. When summoned to answer for their conduct the Fellows resolutely maintained their

ground, and the president, who was their spokesman, defended their rights with great skill and firmness. The commissioners of course decided against him; he was pronounced an intruder, and the Fellows were forbidden to recognize his authority. "Having adjourned to the afternoon," says the inscription on Hough's monument in Worcester Cathedral, "the president came again into the court, and having desired to speak a few words, they all took off their hats and gave him leave whereupon he said, 'My lords, you were pleased this morning to deprive me of my place of president of this college; I do hereby protest against all your proceedings, and against all that you have done or hereafter shall do in prejudice of me and my right, as illegal, unjust, and null, and therefore I appeal to my sovereign lord the king in his courts of justice.'" The commissioners were thrown into a paroxysm of fury by this firm but temperate protest, which was greeted with loud applause by the gownsmen present, and Wright had the insolence to threaten the president with the vengeance of the King's Bench. Hough was deposed and deprived, and Parker was installed by proxy; but only two members of the college took part in the ceremony. Even the butler and the porter refused to execute the orders of the intruders, and were dismissed; no blacksmith in the town would force the lock of the president's lodgings, and the servants of the commissioners had to break open the door with iron bars. The ejection of the Fellows who supported Hough speedily followed, and as if deprivation of office and income was not a sufficient penalty for their refusal to obey the illegal commands of the king, the High Commission declared them incapable of ever holding any church preferment. But they were rescued from indignity by a national subscription, to which the Princess of Orange subscribed two hundred pounds. The demies, or scholars, refused to acknowledge the only two Fellows, Smith and Charnock, who had expressed their will-

* State Papers. James II. Stoughton, vol. iv. pp. 185-187.

† Entering Book. Stoughton, Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. p. 189.

ingness to obey the king, and had consequently been allowed to remain. Only one of their number accepted the offer made to them of the vacant fellowships, and he was turned out of the hall by the rest. In the end a large portion of the demies also were expelled. The new president, Parker, died in the midst of the contest, and was succeeded by Bonaventure Gifford, a Roman Catholic bishop. Twelve Romanists were admitted as Fellows in one day, while some Protestants who stooped to apply for fellowships were refused. The service of the Roman Catholic church was performed in the chapel, and the college was converted into a popish seminary*. The whole country was thrown into a state of violent agitation by these arbitrary and illegal proceedings, which "churchmen considered as an attack upon the establishment, nonconformists as an attack upon Protestantism, politicians as an attack on chartered liberty, and people who did not care for religion or politics as an attack on the rights of property"†

The reckless intriguers by whose counsels James was now guided were greatly troubled about the succession to the throne, and looked forward with painful apprehensions to the accession of such a staunch Protestant as the Princess Mary. It is asserted, on the authority of a French writer, that at this time a project was entertained at court for the conversion of the Princess Anne, and her consequent succession to the throne in place of her sister Mary. Barillon, it is understood, influenced by the reasoning of Father Petre, and in concert with the cabal of which that intriguer was the head, suggested the expedient to Louis XIV., who discouraged the hopeless enterprise. It was, however, revived when Lord Castlemaine was ambassador at Rome; but the pope, though he naturally wished to gain over to his communion a heretic of so exalted a rank, viewed the attempt in nearly the same light as the

French king, and expressed only a reluctant concurrence. Fortified by this opinion, however faintly uttered, James used means to accomplish an object dear to his heart as a Romanist, and so important to the designs of his friends, the ardent Roman Catholics who surrounded his person. There does not appear, however, to be any ground for charging him with the serious intention of defrauding his eldest daughter of her birthright; though the temptation of obtaining a preference to the throne, as the reward of her change of creed, was pressed upon Anne by Bonrepaux, the agent of Louis. He began, it is said, by sounding the Danish ambassador respecting the probability of converting Prince George, her husband; holding out the assurance that an event so propitious to the Romish church would certainly determine the king in favour of his younger child. With him such considerations would probably have prevailed, as he had few obstacles to overcome in the form of principle or attachment to any particular mode of worship. But his consort, who had enjoyed the benefit of more solid instruction, would not listen to the bribe, and firmly repelled every attempt to make her relinquish the tenets which she had received in childhood, and approved in her maturer years.

Foiled in their attempt upon Anne, some of the more desperate of the Jesuitical faction suggested that the king might disinherit both his daughters, and leave his crown at the disposal of the French monarch. It was better, they said, in a paper which set forth their plan, for Englishmen to be the vassals of France than the slaves of the devil. A copy of this document found its way to the Dutch ambassador, who put it into the hands of James. He was greatly agitated, and solemnly protested that the statement was false. "Nobody," he said, "ever dared to hint such a thing to me. I never would listen to it. God does not command us to propagate the true religion by injustice, and that would be

* Howell's State Trials. Burnet, vol. i. p. 699.

† Stoughton, vol. v. p. 139.

"the foulest, the most unnatural injustice"* It is not probable that James ever seriously entertained a project so insane, though Barillon himself, a few days later, wrote to the French court that the king of England had begun to listen to suggestions respecting a change in the order of succession. But there is no doubt that he was an accomplice in a scheme formed at this time by Tyrconnel for separating Ireland from the British empire, and placing that country under the protection of France, in the event of the crown devolving on a Protestant sovereign. The plot had been made known to the French monarch, who had instructed his envoy to assure Tyrconnel of his cordial approbation of the proposal. This infamous negotiation, though intended to be kept a profound secret, was known to several persons for whom it was not intended. It was at least strongly suspected at the Hague, and the knowledge that James was prepared to sacrifice the rights of his children to his zeal for popery, must have contributed not a little to reconcile the Princess Mary to the enterprise which her husband, a few months later, undertook for the expulsion of her father from his throne.

While these desperate intriguers were thus planning the destruction of the British constitution, it was whispered that an event was about to take place which would render their projects unnecessary. Mary of Este, James' queen, had already borne four children, who had died shortly after their birth; but four years had elapsed since her last pregnancy, and it seems to have been generally taken for granted that there was now no likelihood that she would give an heir to the throne. Zealous Romanists had for some time been offering up fervent prayers that this boon, so important for the establishment of the true faith in the kingdom, might be vouchsafed to the king. The rich offerings which the mother of the queen had presented to the shrine of

the Virgin at Loretto, and a pilgrimage made by James during this summer to St. Winifred's Well in Wales, were supposed to have produced the desired effect; and on the 23rd of December the pregnancy of the queen was announced in the *Gazette*, together with an order for a day of thanksgiving for this auspicious event. The announcement was received with almost universal disbelief and ridicule; and the popular suspicions that a fraud was intended were strengthened by the insolent triumph of some of the Roman Catholic party, and the folly of others, who spoke of the expected event as strange and miraculous, and confidently predicted that the unborn infant would be a boy. Barillon wrote to his master that "the pregnancy was not believed to be true in London; and that in the country those who spread the intelligence were laughed at." And the Princess Anne, in communicating the intelligence to her sister Mary, says, "The queen being so positive it will be a son, and the principles of that religion being such that they will stick at nothing, be it ever so wicked, if it will promote their interest, give some cause to fear there may be foul play intended." And after mentioning several dubious circumstances, she adds, "These things give me so much cause of suspicion, I believe when she is brought to bed nobody will be convinced 'tis her child unless it prove a daughter. For my part, I declare I shall not, except I see the child and she parted."*

The jesuitical cabal who now wielded supreme authority at the court were not satisfied, however, with the prospect of a Roman Catholic heir to the throne. They were well aware that if the king should die before his successor came of age, the Prince of Orange or the Princess would be regent, and the supreme power would of course be placed in the hands of Protestants. To provide a remedy for this danger it was necessary that Parliament should be convened, and James immediately set to work to secure

* This paper, which is in the archives of both France and Holland, was first brought to light by Lord Macaulay. See *History*, vol. ii p 306.

* See Appendix to Sir John Dalrymple's *History*

the return of members favourable to his policy. It was resolved first of all to revise the commissions of peace and of the lieutenancy, and to retain only those members who should intimate their willingness to support his Majesty's measures. A Board of Regulators as they were called, consisting of seven privy councillors, was appointed to regulate the municipal corporations; and the lord-lieutenants received written orders to question the justices of the peace in their several counties whether they were prepared to act in accordance with the king's wishes, to take down their answers in writing, and to transmit them to the Board of Regulators. They were also to furnish lists of the Roman Catholics, and of the Protestant dissenters, whom they considered best qualified for office.

One half of the lord-lieutenants of England peremptorily refused to comply with these orders, and were at once dismissed from their offices, and deprived of the other posts which some of them held. In the list of the peers who were thus disgracefully treated by the infatuated monarch, were included the most illustrious subjects in the kingdom, the heads of the great families—of De Vere, Talbot, Sackville, Stanley, Compton, Noel, Seymour, and other cavaliers, whose fathers had perilled life and estate for the house of Stewart. In most instances they were replaced by Roman Catholics, along with one or two subservient Protestants without character or position. These court tools were directed to put to the magistrates and deputy-lieutenants the three following questions.—If you are elected a member of the House of Commons, will you vote for the repeal of the Test Act and of the penal laws? Will you give your aid to those candidates who engage to vote for that repeal? And will you support the declaration for liberty of conscience by living peaceably with men of different religious principles? The greater part of them returned answers in a form most skilfully drawn up, in all probability by Halifax, and circulated all over

the kingdom. "As a member of the House of Commons, should I have the honour of a seat there, I shall think it my duty carefully to weigh such reasons as may be adduced in debate for and against a Bill of Indulgence, and then to act according to my conscientious conviction. As an elector, I shall give my support to candidates whose notions of the duty of a representative agree with my own. As a private man, it is my wish to live in peace and charity with everybody." Promises and threats were tried, but proved equally ineffective to overcome the stubborn resistance of the country gentlemen. From every quarter of the country reports were received by the king and his advisers, that the gentry were with one voice declaring that they would send no man to Parliament who would break down the safeguards of the Protestant religion. Even the Roman Catholic country gentlemen who were placed on the new commissions of peace and lieutenancy, refused to stoop to be the instruments of the policy of the court. Several of them declined to accept the offices of sheriff or deputy-lieutenant, and those who accepted declared, says a contemporary writer, "that whoever expects false returns from them will be disappointed." "The popish gentry," he adds, "that live at their houses in the country, are much different from those that live here in town." A similar spectacle was exhibited in the towns. The Church and Tory magistrates were dismissed by the hundred, and their places filled by Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, but it was soon discovered that these were every whit as hostile as their predecessors to the policy of the king and his jesuitical counsellors; and though in not a few instances they were in their turn dismissed, their successors proved equally unmanageable. But though James could not shut his eyes to the fact, that his favourite scheme of suspending the penal laws by his own authority was not acceptable to the great majority of his subjects, even among the better informed classes of society, so incurable was his infatuation that

he resolved to pursue the course which he had chosen, though at the manifest hazard of sacrificing his crown and family.

As the Regulators had thus been completely-baffled in their efforts to win over the corporations to the side of the court, it was now proposed that the charters of the boroughs should be resumed, and new charters granted confining the franchise to a select body appointed by the sovereign. A few of the boroughs surrendered their charters in obedience to the royal command, and were remodelled to suit the policy of the government, but the great majority firmly refused to give up their privileges, and threats and prosecutions, and even the quartering of soldiers on refractory towns, entirely failed to terrify the citizens into submission.

At a moment when the public mind was in this state of irritation and alarm, James thought proper not only to republish his new Declaration of Liberty of Conscience (April, 1688), but also commanded that it should be read in all the churches on two successive Sundays, and that the bishops should see the order obeyed. He evidently expected that the clergy would practise the doctrine of non-resistance and passive obedience which they had so often preached, and had declared to be the distinctive dogma of their church. And as he was well aware that they regarded the Indulgence as a violation of the constitution of the realm, and a fatal blow levelled at the safeguards of the church, there seems every probability that the order was intended both to insult and degrade them. They felt that they were placed in a cruel dilemma, and seem at first to have hesitated what course they should follow. A meeting of the London clergy was held, on the 23rd of May, to consider whether they would or would not obey the royal command. Tillotson, Sherlock, Patrick, Stillingfleet, and other eminent divines, were present and took part in the discussion. At first the general feeling seemed to be in favour of compliance; but this was strenuously resisted by Dr. Fowler,

vicar of St Giles', who declared that, whatever the majority might decide, he could not in conscience read the declaration. Tillotson, Patrick, Sherlock, and Stillingfleet supported his opinion, and their resolution was strengthened by an assurance conveyed to the meeting in a note from some nonconformists, who said that, "instead of being alienated from the church, they would be drawn closer to her by her making a stand for religion and liberty." In the end a resolution was unanimously adopted and signed, pledging all present not to read the declaration, and the paper having been sent round, received the signatures of eighty-five London incumbents.*

Another and still more important meeting had been held, on the 18th of the same month, at Lambeth Palace. It consisted, besides the primate, of Compton, bishop of London; Turner, bishop of Ely, Lake, bishop of Chichester, White, bishop of Peterborough; Trelawney, bishop of Bristol; Ken, bishop of Bath and Wells, and Lloyd, bishop of St Asaph—who had been invited by the archbishop to come up to London to consult with him what course should be followed at this crisis. Tillotson, Tenison, Patrick, Sherlock, Stillingfleet, and Grove, rector of St Mary's, were also present. After long deliberation the conference ended in the drawing up of a petition to the king, in which, after disclaiming all disloyalty and intolerance, the prelates declared that they were willing to come to such a temper towards dissenters as should be thought fit, when the subject should be considered and settled in Parliament and Convocation; but the dispensing power had, both in the late and in the present reign, been declared illegal by Parliament, and they could not in prudence, honour, or conscience, be parties to the publication of an illegal declaration in the house of God and during the time of divine service.

This paper was signed by the primate and six of the bishops, Lloyd, Turner, Lake, Ken, White, and Trelawney. Compton

* Mackintosh, p. 246

bishop of London, being under suspension did adhibit his signature to it. On the evening of the day on which they performed this important act, the six bishops set out for Whitehall to seek an audience of the king. The archbishop having been forbidden the court, did not accompany them. Sunderland, to whom the petition was first offered by Lloyd, refused to look at it, but went immediately to the royal closet and informed the king that the bishops were in waiting. It was now after ten o'clock, and James directed that they should be immediately admitted. The bishop of St Asaph knelt before him, and presented the petition. Taking the paper from Lloyd, James said, "This is my lord of Canterbury's hand," "Yes, sir," was the reply, "his own hand." After reading the petition his Majesty exclaimed in an angry tone, "What, the Church of England against my dispensing power? The Church of England! They that always preached it." The prelates declared that they never preached any such thing, but only obedience, and suffering when they could not obey. "This," added James as he folded up the paper, "is a great surprise to me. here are strange words, I did not expect this from you. This is a standard of rebellion." The bishops rejoined, "that they had adventured their lives for his Majesty, and would lose the last drop of their blood rather than lift up a finger against him." The king, according to his usual habit, repeated the same words again, and again said, "I tell you this is a standard of rebellion, I never saw such an address." "Rebellion, sir!" exclaimed Trelawney. "I beseech your Majesty, do not say so hard a thing of us. For God's sake do not believe we are, or can be, guilty of rebellion. It is impossible that I or any of my family should be so. Your Majesty cannot but remember that you sent me down into Cornwall to quell Monmouth's rebellion, and I am as ready to do what I can to quell another if there were occasion." "Sir, we have quelled one rebellion," said Lake, "and will not

raise another." "I hope, sir," said Ken, "that you will grant to us that liberty of conscience which you grant to all mankind." Still James went on repeating his former assertion, "It is a rebellion, a standard of rebellion. No good churchman ever questioned the dispensing power before. Some of you have preached and written for it. It is a standard of rebellion. I will have my declaration published." "We have two duties to perform," answered Ken; "our duty to God, and our duty to your Majesty. We honour you, but we fear God." James continued to insist that he would be obeyed, that his declaration should be published, and that God had given him the dispensing power, and he was determined to maintain it. The conversation then ended, and the bishops retired*. On that same evening, through some channel which has never been discovered, the document was printed and circulated in thousands throughout the city, producing an extraordinary sensation. It afterwards received the signatures of the bishops of London, Norwich, Gloucester, Salisbury, Winchester, and Exeter.

On Sunday the 20th May, the day appointed for the first reading of the declaration in London, only four out of a hundred clergymen obeyed the order. It was not read even in the chapel of St James' Palace. At Whitehall it was read by one of the choir, who used to read the chapters. At Westminster Abbey where the obnoxious paper was read by Sprat, bishop of Rochester, who officiated there as dean, as soon as he began the people crowded out of the choir in a body and drowned his voice. A similar scene took place in the four London churches where the declaration was read. In the provinces the great body of the clergy followed the example of their metropolitan brethren, and it was estimated that out of the entire number, upwards of ten thousand, not more than two hundred in all obeyed the injunctions issued by the sovereign.

* Patrick's Autobiography. D'Oyley's Life of Sancroft.

CHAPTER XIII —A D 1688

JAMES RESOLVES TO PROSECUTE THE SEVEN BISHOPS—THEIR IMPRISONMENT IN THE TOWER—POPULAR ENTHUSIASM IN THEIR FAVOUR—BIRTH OF THE PRINCE OF WALES—GENERAL BELIEF THAT HE WAS SPURIOUS—TRIAL AND ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS—REJOICINGS OF THE PEOPLE—FEELINGS OF THE KING—INVITATION OF THE WHIG LEADERS TO THE PRINCE OF ORANGE—IRISH TROOPS BROUGHT TO ENGLAND—CONSPIRACY IN THE ARMY—PREPARATIONS OF WILLIAM—HIS DECLARATION—HIS LANDING AT TORBAY—RECEPTION BY THE PEOPLE—DEFECTION OF THE KING'S FRIENDS AND FAMILY—ABDICATION AND FLIGHT OF JAMES

To advance or to retreat was now about equally dangerous. Sunderland recommended that the king should announce that, for the sake of the important services which the church had in former times rendered to himself and his family, he would not inflict any penalty on those prelates and clergymen who had disobeyed his commands, but would leave them to the punishment which their own reflections would ultimately inflict. The other members of the council, even Arundel and Dover, concurred in this opinion. But Jeffreys strenuously urged that proceedings should be taken against the seven refractory prelates, and his advice was followed by James, though he afterwards owned it to have been "a fatal counsel." The chancellor, however, shrank from the responsibility and odium of a trial before the High Commission in which he presided, and recommended the king to proceed by criminal information before the court of King's Bench.

On the 8th of June the seven prelates, in compliance with a notice sent them on the 27th of May, appeared before the privy council. They at first stood upon their right to decline saying anything that might criminate themselves, but on being commanded by the king to answer, they acknowledged the petition. They were then informed by Jeffreys that it was the royal pleasure that proceedings should be taken against them in the court of King's Bench for a seditious libel, and called upon them to enter into recognizances to appear. They

refused to do so, and insisted that as peers of the realm they were not bound to enter into recognizances in the case of a misdemeanour; and as they firmly adhered to this resolution, a warrant was made out and signed by all the privy councillors present, except Lord Berkeley and Father Petre, committing the bishops to the Tower.

The intelligence spread through London like lightning. The love of liberty and zeal for religion, united, produced an extraordinary agitation among all classes of citizens. An immense concourse of people assembled to see the prelates conveyed to the Tower. "The concern of the people," says Evelyn, an eye-witness, "was wonderful, infinite crowds on their knees begging their blessing, and praying for them as they passed." They were conveyed from Whitehall by water. The whole river was alive with boats on this summer evening; the prelates were followed by the tears and prayers of thousands, and many even ran into the river and up to their waists in water, imploring a blessing on the captives, and praying aloud to heaven to protect the venerable sufferers for religion and liberty. The very soldiers on guard at the Tower, when the prelates landed at the Traitor's Gate, implored their benediction; and they and their comrades, to the great indignation of Sir Edward Hales the lieutenant of the Tower—a pervert to popery—drank the health of their prisoners with brimming cups. He ordered the officers to see that the offence was not repeated; but their

efforts completely failed, and they returned to him with the report that no other health was drunk in the garrison, and that the soldiers had declared that they would continue to drink it until the bishops were set free * The next day great numbers, including the first nobles of the kingdom, visited the prisoners, and expressed their sympathy with them, while Tower Hill was crowded with thousands of the humbler classes The nonconformists sent a deputation of ten of their ministers to express their cordial approbation and sympathy The king was so incensed at this proceeding, that he sent for four members of the deputation and reprimanded them for their conduct They boldly replied, that they felt bound to stand by the bishops as men who were constant to the Protestant faith

Two days after the gates of the Tower had been closed upon the seven prelates (June 10th), the queen was safely delivered of a son It had been announced that she did not expect to be delivered till July, and partly from haste, partly from gross mismanagement, a number of persons who ought to have been present were not invited The Princess Anne had been sent to Bath to drink the waters, the Hydes, her uncles and the proper protectors of the rights of the two princesses, their nieces, were not summoned, and neither was the Dutch ambassador, the representative of the Prince of Orange and his wife, while, on the other hand, a large proportion of the privy councillors who were present at the birth of the prince were Roman Catholics, and those of them who professed to be Protestants were regarded by the great body of the people as utterly unworthy of credit The impression was almost universal that an imposture had been practised "The generality of people," says a contemporary writer, "conclude all is a trick, because they say the reckoning is changed, the princess sent away, none of the Clarendon family nor the Dutch ambassador sent

for, the suddenness of the thing, the sermons, the confidence of the priests, the hurry"* The presence in the queen's bed of a healthy child was accounted for in various ways; but the story most commonly received was that it had been adroitly conveyed thither in the interior of a warming pan. A day of thanksgiving was appointed by order of council, and a form of prayer was drawn up to be read on the following Sunday in all the churches and chapels of the metropolis and its vicinity, and, by the 1st of July next, in all the other places throughout the kingdom Letters, signed by Jeffreys and other privy councillors, were sent to announce the birth of the prince to the lord-lieutenants of counties, and on the 29th of June an order was issued for inserting the name of the Prince of Wales in the Book of Common Prayer But the public remained obstinately incredulous; and Zulestein wrote to the Prince of Orange, what the Spanish ambassador admitted to be strictly true, that not one person in ten believed the child to have been born of the queen

This event tended greatly to increase the public aversion to the king, and still more the popularity of the bishops On the 15th of June they were brought before the court of King's Bench by a writ of habeas corpus They pleaded not guilty, and the 29th of June having been fixed for their trial, they were released on their own recognizances On leaving the court they were again surrounded by great crowds, entreating their blessing As the people who saw them going to their own homes imagined that they had been set at liberty, acclamations rent the air, the bells of the abbey and of the churches were rung, and the bishops found it difficult to escape the importunate and enthusiastic crowd of admirers In the evening bonfires blazed in the streets, and two Roman Catholics, who were so unwise as to beat some boys who were taking part in these rejoicings, were maltreated by the mob

* Baresby's Memoirs, p 347

* Johnstone, June 13th, 1688

These manifestations of public feeling, and the sympathy expressed for the prelates in every quarter of the kingdom, and even in Scotland, appalled the instruments of royal tyranny. Jeffreys attempted to exonerate himself from blame, and sent a friendly message to the bishops; and Sunderland strongly recommended that the king should avail himself of the auspicious event of the birth of his son to extend his clemency to the offenders. But James, as usual, obstinately persisted in his purpose. He would go on; he said he had been only too indulgent, indulgence ruined his father: and Sunderland found that he had gone far to forfeit the royal favour and confidence by his recommendation that timely concessions should be made. In order to prop up his tottering power, he resolved to turn papist, and about a week before the day fixed for the trial of the bishops, it was publicly announced that the prime minister of England had been received into the bosom of the Romish church.

On the 29th of June the memorable trial took place in Westminster Hall, which was crowded with a dense mass of deeply interested spectators, no fewer than thirty-five temporal peers having been counted in the crowd. Chief-justice Wright, a worthless protégé of Jeffreys, and a most servile tool of the court, presided, and with him were associated Allybone, a Roman Catholic, Powell, a man of learning and ability and character, and Holloway, who had been placed on the bench for the express purpose of perverting the law in favour of the prerogative. The prosecution was conducted by Powis the attorney-general, a man as weak as he was worthless; and by Williams the solicitor-general, a violent Whig and an exclusionist, who had recently gone over to the court, but a man of abilities and courage, though deficient in judgment and in command over his temper. They were assisted by Serjeant Trinder, a Roman Catholic, and Sir Bartholomew Shower, recorder of London. On the side of the bishops

were arrayed almost all the most eminent men then at the bar: Sawyers and Finch, the late attorney and solicitor generals, who, as Roger Coke says, "were so zealous to find my Lord Russell, Colonel Sidney, Mr Cornish, and others, guilty of high treason, and, now they are turned out, are as zealous for the acquittal of the bishops." With them were joined Pemberton, who had been chief-justice of the King's Bench, but had been ejected from office on account of his humanity and moderation, Pollexfen, an eminent lawyer and keen Whig; Sir Cresswell Levinz, who had also been removed from the bench, Sir George Treby, who had formerly been recorder of London; and John Somers, then a young and unknown man, but afterwards the illustrious chancellor and Whig statesman.

The court had hoped to obtain a subversive jury by means of Sir Samuel Astrey, clerk of the crown, but though he did his best he did not succeed. The jury consisted of a baronet, a knight, and ten esquires, some of whom were nonconformists; but the presence of one jurymen excited apprehension—Michael Arnold, the brewer to the palace, on whose vote the government confidently counted. The foreman was Sir Roger Langley, a baronet of old and honourable family.

The jury were sworn, and the trial began. The information having been read, the first point was to prove the handwriting of the bishops, which was not easily done. After every other means had failed, Blathwyt, a clerk of the privy council, was produced, and swore that he heard the prelates own their signatures to the king, but being subjected to a severe cross-examination, in spite of the angry remonstrances of the crown counsel, he was compelled to relate all that passed on that occasion, and made it evident that the bishops had good reason to believe that their acknowledgment, made by the express command of his Majesty, would not be used against them.

The counsel for the defence then raised the objection that it was necessary, not only

to prove that the bishops had written the alleged libel, but that they had done so in the county of Middlesex, which it could be proved was not the case. The crown lawyers, thus baffled, were obliged to change their ground; and they now contended that the libel, if not written, had been published in Middlesex, by the delivery of it into the king's hands. But the witnesses they adduced to prove this fact completely broke down in their testimony, amid shouts of laughter at the discomfiture of the attorney and solicitor generals. The case seemed at an end, and an acquittal on this technical ground certain, when at last, with manifest reluctance, Sunderland was brought into court to prove the publication. The lord-president, aware of his unpopularity and of the excitement among the citizens, caused himself to be carried through Westminster in a sedan chair, the head of which was down, but he was recognized by the mob, who hooted, hissed, and cried out, "Popish dog." He entered the court pale and trembling, and with eyes fixed on the ground deposed in a low and faltering voice that the bishops came to him with a petition to the king, and that he introduced them to his Majesty for the purpose of presenting it. On this evidence the court held that publication was proved.

The counsel for the defence now resolved to take their stand upon the illegality of the king's claim to dispense with the statutes of the realm, and on the right of the subjects to petition for the redress of grievances. The chief-justice was in great perplexity between his fear of offending the king, and his dread of the numerous and powerful nobles who were present and watched his conduct. He looked, said a spectator of the scene, as "if all the peers present had halters in their pockets." He spoke aside to his brethren on the bench, and said, "I must not suffer them to dispute the king's power of suspending laws." "They must touch that point," was the rejoinder of Judge Powell, "for if the king hath no such powers

—as clearly he hath not—the petition is no attack on the king's legal power, and therefore no libel." During three hours the counsel for the bishops argued this point, and proved by unanswerable arguments that the dispensing power was a violation of the fundamental principles of the constitution, and had been repeatedly declared illegal by Parliament. Somers spoke last, and though his speech lasted only a few minutes, it placed the question at issue in the clearest and most convincing light. "The offence imputed," he said, "was a false, a malicious, a seditious libel. False the paper was not, for every fact which it set forth had been proved from the journals of Parliament to be true. Malicious the paper was not, for the defendants had not sought an occasion of strife, but had been placed by the government in such a situation that they must either oppose themselves to the royal will, or violate the most sacred obligations of conscience and honour. Seditious the paper was not; for it had not been scattered by the writers among the rabble, but delivered privately into the hands of the king alone and a libel it was not, but a decent petition, such as by the laws of imperial Rome, by the laws of all civilized states, a subject who thinks himself aggrieved may with propriety present to the sovereign."*

The turncoat solicitor-general tried in vain to shake this massive and conclusive argument. He spoke at great length, and with much bitterness. "No man," he contended, "may say of the great officers of the kingdom, far less of the king, that they act unreasonably, for that may beget a desire of reformation, and the last age will abundantly show whither such a desire doth tend." He even went so far as to insist, amid the clamours and hisses of the audience, that no subject or body of subjects, except the houses of Parliament, had a right to petition the king.

The chief-justice in summing up evaded the question of the dispensing power, and

* Macanlay, vol. ii. p. 379

admitted, in spite of the solicitor's denial, that the subject had a right to petition, but pronounced the petition of the bishops a libel. Allybone followed on the same side, but Holloway somewhat cautiously, and Powell boldly, took an opposite view, and the latter explicitly declared that in his opinion the Declaration of Indulgence was a nullity, and the dispensing power illegal—an act of independence which cost them both their seats *

The trial had begun at nine o'clock in the morning, and it was seven o'clock in the evening when the jury retired to consider their verdict. They remained so long in consultation that they were at last locked up for the night, and the judges and the bishops returned to their own homes. The deepest anxiety was felt throughout the night, and the stairs leading to the room where the jury were inclosed, were watched with the utmost vigilance by the solicitor for the bishops and a body of servants, to prevent unfair play. Not even a candle was allowed to enter. It afterwards transpired that Arnold, the brewer to the palace, was the cause of the long delay in bringing in the verdict. He complained piteously of the dilemma in which he was placed. "Whatever I do," he said, "I am sure to be ruined. If I say Not guilty, I shall brew no more for the king, and if I say Guilty, I shall brew no more for any body else." At length he gave in about six o'clock in the morning, but the court did not open till nine. The nature of the verdict was still a profound secret, and the jury took their places in the box amid breathless silence. But when the foreman, in answer to the question of the clerk of the court, "Do you find the defendants, or any of them, guilty of the misdemeanour whereof they are impeached, or not guilty?" said "Not guilty," such an instantaneous shout rose from benches and galleries, that as Lord Clarendon, who was present, said, "One would have thought the hall had cracked." It was instantly caught up by the tens of

* Collection of State Trials

thousands without, who set up a huzzah which was heard at Temple Bar. The people on their knees made a lane from the court as the bishops passed, and begged their blessing. The jury could scarce make their way out of the hall, and were forced to shake hands with hundreds, who exclaimed, "God bless you and prosper your families. You have done like honest, good-natured gentlemen. You have saved us all to-day." As the nobles, sixty in number, who had attended to countenance the prisoners, drove off, they flung money out of their coach windows for the mob to drink the health of the king, the bishops, and the jury. The bells of the city churches rang out joyous peals. The acquitted prelates, exhorting the people as they passed to fear God and honour the king, proceeded to Whitehall Chapel, and returned thanks for their deliverance, and the churches, which were open, were crowded with pious persons, who repaired thither to pour forth their gratitude to God for the liberation of his servants. At night blazing bonfires were lighted from one end of the city to the other, nearly all the windows of the houses were lighted with rows of candles, seven in number, the taper in the middle, which was longer than the others, representing the primate. The Guy Fawkes pageants, which had been discontinued for some years, were suddenly revived, and a splendid effigy of the pope in canonicals, accompanied by a train of cardinals and Jesuits, was paraded through the city and then burnt by the populace before the palace, greatly to the indignation of the king. Several of these effigies, indeed, were exhibited in different parts of the city. These demonstrations of triumph and gladness continued all night, and were not terminated until the bells of the churches were heard ringing on Sunday morning, calling the people to prayers. The enthusiasm of the metropolis was repeated in the provinces; and especially among the citizens of the principal towns, the tidings of the victory which the bishops had gained over the court

were welcomed with transports of joy On that critical morning James was at Hounslow Heath reviewing the troops, and he was in the tent of Lord Feversham, the commander of the army, when Sunderland arrived with the news that the bishops had been acquitted The king was greatly disturbed, and exclaimed, "So much the worse for them" By this time that "very rebellion in noise" which arose from the capital had reached the camp, and as soon as James set out for London the soldiers raised a universal shout He was startled at the sound, and asked what it meant "Nothing," was the answer, "but the soldiers shouting because the bishops have been acquitted" "Call you that nothing?" said James, "but so much the worse for them"* He might well be disturbed and alarmed, for these shouts of triumph sounded the knell of his power and dynasty, and showed that the hearts of the people were thoroughly weaned from him The consummation of the Revolution under a new sovereign was now reduced to a mere question of time and manner†

This crisis, too, displayed in the most striking light the extent of the affection entertained even by the populace for the established church It was the first and only occasion, in the history of England, on which the love of the church and the love of liberty were united in the minds of the English people Such indications would have taught any government capable of learning the secret of its own weakness, that its very existence was perilled by assailing principles so firmly rooted, and now rendered doubly precious by the danger which threatened them

All ranks and classes in England, from the proudest noble down to the peasant, and all Protestant sects, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Baptists alike, were now united in one compact body against the government Even the Anglican clergy, the firmest

supporters of the throne, who had hitherto gloried in maintaining the duty of implicit obedience to the powers that be, even in the case of a Nero, now that their sovereign had become their oppressor instead of their protector, underwent a complete change of opinion concerning the lawfulness of resistance As soon as they found the prerogative turned against themselves, they discovered it to be unconstitutional and mischievous

The Whigs clearly saw that the time had now come for the attempt they had long meditated against the existing government The Prince of Orange himself was of the same opinion "Now or never," he exclaimed to Dykvelt Edward Russell, nephew to the duke of Bedford, was despatched to the Hague, for the purpose of representing to the prince the state of the public mind, and he strongly advised a descent upon England in the interests of Protestantism and the constitution William was quite ready to follow this advice, provided that he should be assured of the assistance of leading statesmen representing the great interests of the country

On his return to England, Russell found the country in a state of great excitement on account of the imprisonment of the bishops and the birth of the prince of Wales, and he lost no time in consulting the leaders of the Whig party as to the course they should pursue In order that he might make himself acquainted with the views not less than with the resources of his friends, the Prince of Orange despatched Zulestien, a trustworthy envoy, to London, under pretence of congratulating James on the birth of a son At one of the meetings held under the auspices of this diplomatist, at the house of the earl of Shrewsbury, an address to the prince was written in cipher and signed by the earl himself, and the earls of Devonshire and Danby, the bishop of London, Lord Lumley, Admiral Russell, and Henry Sidney, brother of Algernon, afterwards created earl of Rodney They represented to his highness that a large pro-

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 744

† The Proceedings and Trial of the Seven Bishops in the Court of King's Bench at Westminster, in the Fourth Year of the Reign of James II. Anno Dom. 1688

portion of the people were extremely desirous of a change, and that the higher classes, though they did not make known their wishes with the same freedom, were animated with similar feelings. They assured him that, if he were to land with a force sufficient to afford protection to his adherents, he would in the course of a few days find himself at the head of an army double in number that of the king; that crowds of officers and privates would abandon the royal standard and join the ranks of the friends of liberty and of the Protestant religion; that, all circumstances considered, the present was a most favourable moment for the attempt; and concluded with a declaration that, if he were to make it before the end of the year, they would not only themselves take up arms, but also induce many others to follow their example.*

This important and perilous document was intrusted to Admiral Herbert, who, under the disguise of a common sailor, succeeded in reaching the Dutch coast on the Friday after the trial of the bishops, and immediately placed the paper in the hands of the prince.

The policy which James had attempted to carry out, had completely alienated from him the affections of the great body of his subjects in England and Scotland. Ireland presented fewer difficulties, and seemed to afford a much more favourable field for his experiments in the exercise of the prerogative; and yet the result of his policy there was not, upon the whole, more favourable to his cause. As the Irish population was chiefly Roman Catholic, he imagined that his interests would be greatly strengthened, were the Act of Settlement to be so far remodelled as to restore to the families of the ancient proprietors some portion of the lands which their ancestors had enjoyed. In connection with this project, he gave instructions to fill the native army with officers of his own religion, and thereby to

render it more fit for his purpose, should an appeal to force become indispensable either in that country or at home; and acting on this authority, Tyrconnel, as we have seen, had dismissed such Protestant officers as were unfavourable to this policy, and had discharged great numbers of the common soldiers, for no other reason than that they professed the same faith. All power, civil and military, was now transferred to members of the papal church. Fitton, a lawyer rendered infamous by his crimes, was made chancellor; and he being a violent bigot to the creed of Rome, denounced all the Protestants as rebels, traitors, and villains. The charters of Dublin and of all the other incorporations were annulled; the Protestant freemen were expelled to make room for papists, and new charters were granted, which placed the boroughs, as well as the principal cities, in subjection to the will of the sovereign. But in attempting the repeal of the Act of Settlement, Tyrconnel found himself opposed even by the Roman Catholics themselves, when called to give their opinion in the privy council. Lord Bellasyse is said to have exclaimed, that "Talbot was madman enough to destroy ten kingdoms."

The success which had so far attended the operations of Tyrconnel, induced the advisers of the king to recommend that the Irish troops should be employed to keep England in subjection. It was clear that no assistance need be expected from English soldiers in carrying out the dispensing power. The experiment had been tried in a regiment of infantry, commanded by Lord Lichfield, and had entirely failed. With the exception of two officers and a few privates—all Roman Catholics—the whole regiment had laid down their arms and prepared to quit the service (the alternative offered them), rather than subscribe an engagement binding them to assist in carrying into effect the king's intentions concerning the test. But it was earnestly represented by Barillon that there was no limit to the number of Roman Catholic soldiers who might be

* Burnet, vol. iii. p. 264. "The man in whose hands the conduct of this design was chiefly deposited, by the prince's own order, was Mr. Sydney, brother to the earl of Leicester and to Algernon Sydney."

brought over from Ireland, on whom implicit reliance might be placed to support the royal policy. James hesitated, for he was well aware of the strong feeling against Irishmen which pervaded all classes of his English subjects, but in his anxiety to be surrounded by soldiers on whom he could rely, he yielded to the advice of the French ambassador so far as to bring over a considerable number of Irish recruits to fill up vacancies in English regiments, though the numbers were quite insufficient to coerce the people of England into the adoption of his policy. A furious outburst of indignation was the immediate result. The Irish were hated and despised as aliens in blood, in manners, in language, and in religion, and Englishmen of all classes were enraged at the thought that hordes of Irish papists had been brought across the Channel, to assist in destroying the religion and constitution of England. This feeling burned with special fierceness in the army. The soldiers of the duke of Berwick's regiment positively refused to receive a detachment of recruits from Ireland, and declared that they would not serve with these intruders. The lieutenant-colonel, John Beaumont, in his own name and that of five of the captains, protested against the proposal as an insult to the English army, and was in consequence tried before a council of war at Windsor, and sentenced to be cashiered. But their patriotic spirit was applauded by the whole nation. The public feeling found vent in the satirical song of "Lillibullero," written by Wharton, which caught the popular fancy, and was sung from one end of England to the other. Its author afterwards boasted that he had sung a king out of three kingdoms. But in truth, as Lord Macaulay remarks, the success of "Lillibullero" was the effect, and not the cause, of the excited state of public feeling which produced the Revolution.

James in these critical circumstances, was, as usual, his own worst enemy. The failure of his attempt to punish the seven bishops made him only the more resolute in carry-

ing out his favourite policy; and he now determined to make the whole Anglican clergy who had not obeyed his commands feel the effects of his displeasure. An order was immediately issued, enjoining the chancellors of the various dioceses, and the archdeacons, to report to the High Commission the names of all the rectors, vicars, and curates, who had omitted to read the Declaration. But almost all of these clerical officials refused to furnish the information required of them, and when the High Commission met for the purpose of proceeding against the offenders, determined to show them no quarter, they found that scarcely a single return had been sent in. At the same time Sprat, bishop of Rochester, resigned his seat on the commission, declaring that though he had himself read the Declaration, he could take no part in punishing the thousands of pious and loyal divines whose consciences would not permit them to follow his example. This step, taken at such a moment by a man like Sprat, seems to have astounded and terrified the other commissioners. They broke up in confusion and alarm, and never again exercised their functions.

Meanwhile William exerted himself with untiring energy and consummate dexterity to remove the difficulties which lay in the way of his enterprise. He laboured to conciliate all sects in England, and set before the various continental governments the urgent reasons why they should countenance his attempt to "rescue England from vassalage, and to unite her to the European confederacy." The ranks of his adherents in England received daily accessions of persons of high note in the church, the state, and the army. Two of the seven bishops, Lloyd and Trelawney, intimated their readiness to welcome him as the deliverer of the nation. The brother of the latter, Colonel Charles Trelawney, the savage Kirke, and even Churchill, who owed everything to James, expressed their willingness to take up arms for the Protestant religion. Sydney, about the middle of August, passed over to Hol-

land, carrying with him a letter from Churchill, and was followed by Edward Russell and Shrewsbury, the latter bringing the sum of twelve thousand pounds, which he had raised by a mortgage on his estates. Even Sunderland, James' favourite minister, in deep alarm at the prospect of a revolution which would deprive him of estates, titles, office, and perhaps even of life, sought to escape condign punishment for his offences, and to obtain security for his possessions, by promising William his support.

The principal obstacle which the prince had to encounter was the difficulty of assembling a sufficient body of troops in Holland, without exciting apprehension both in France and England. But from this perplexity William found an escape, under cover of the Treaty of Augsburg, which had been made by several of the continental powers in the year 1687. The ambitious projects of Louis had again filled Europe with alarm, and the injuries which that haughty and unscrupulous monarch had inflicted on the Dutch Republic had produced a deep feeling of resentment both in the States-general and among the people. The Prince of Orange, the chief study of whose life was the humiliation of his arrogant rival, induced the emperor, the king of Spain, the king of Sweden, and some of the minor sovereigns of Germany, to enter into the league just mentioned, with the avowed intention of maintaining the integrity of the imperial dominions, though more covertly to defeat the aspiring schemes of the French cabinet. As a party to such an engagement, the warlike preparations of the stadtholder could not create much surprise; and orders were accordingly issued for the encampment of twenty thousand men between Grave and Nimeguen, twenty-seven ships of war were added to a fleet of forty-four sail already in commission; and the several squadrons received instructions to proceed to the Texel or other convenient ports.

No one was so blind to the designs

formed against his throne as James himself, who turned an incredulous ear to every one who warned him of his danger. Louis, who had endeavoured by repeated messages to rouse him from his state of stupid security, at length sent Bonrepaux to convince him, if possible, of the hazards which were accumulating around him, and even to offer the services of his fleet in repelling the meditated invasion. But the king could not, till the last moment, allow himself to believe that his daughter would conspire with her husband to dethrone him, or even that the States-general would permit their ships and soldiers to be employed in so perilous an expedition, while their own country was exposed to the inroads of the French, who were already equipped for the field. The English ambassador at Paris, seeing the infatuation of his master, gave his consent to a measure which might, had it not been opposed by the king himself, possibly have deterred William from his enterprise. D'Avaux, the French minister at the Hague, announced to the States-general that a treaty was concluded between his sovereign and the court of London, and that the first act of hostility committed against the latter would be held as a declaration against both nations. This bold scheme to save the English king in his own despite, was well calculated to disconcert the plans of the Prince of Orange; but his Majesty, whose pride was hurt upon finding that a protecting arm had been extended over him unasked, disavowed all knowledge of the pretended treaty with France, and recalled his ambassador, whom he committed to the Tower.* After the revolution Sunderland, the trusted but treacherous minister of James, who had gone over to the side of the Prince of Orange, boasted, and probably with truth, that it was he who had induced his master to reject the proffered assistance of France.

At length when all doubt relative to the intentions of his son-in-law was removed,

* On the subject of this treaty or alliance, see Burnet, vol. iii. p. 275.

James, in great alarm, made an effort to conciliate at once the States-general and his own subjects. To the former he declared that, so far from there being any compact between him and France, he was ready to unite his forces with theirs and those of Spain to preserve the peace of Europe against the aggressions of Louis, and to recover the confidence of the latter, he made haste to retrace some of the steps he had taken with respect to the Universities, and the indulgence granted to the Roman Catholics. He still refused to make any concession respecting the dispensing power, but he solemnly promised to maintain the Act of Uniformity, and to replace all the magistrates and deputy lieutenants whom he had dismissed. He also abolished the Court of High Commission, restored with great parade the charter of the city of London, and promised the immediate restoration of the forfeited franchises of all the corporations. But all these concessions, as they were too late, proved quite unavailing. He therefore directed all his exertions to augment his forces by land and by sea. He placed his fleet, consisting of nearly forty ships, under the command of Lord Dartmouth, an officer in whom he reposed a just confidence, with instructions to watch the motions of the enemy. The army he intrusted to Lord Feversham, an honest but not an able soldier, the numerical force of which, had its loyalty been unquestionable, might under an experienced leader have made the Prince of Orange regret his undertaking.

As the time drew near when the great attempt must be made, William issued a declaration drawn up by the Grand Pensionary Fagel, but abridged and translated into English by Burnet. This weighty document set forth in detail the systematic violation of the constitution by James; his claim to dispense at his pleasure with the laws of the kingdom; the prostitution of the bench and the servility of the judges; the oppression of the church by the High Commission; the illegal appointment of papists to office in the universities; the dismissal of lieutenants,

deputy-lieutenants, and justices of the peace, for refusing to support an unconstitutional policy; the abrogation of the franchises of the boroughs; and to crown all, the prosecution of the bishops for no other offence than their presenting to their sovereign a modest petition for relief. For the purpose of obtaining for the people of England redress of their grievances, the prince had resolved, in compliance with the request of many lords spiritual and temporal, and of many other persons of all ranks, to go over at the head of a body of troops sufficient for the protection of his own person, but with no thought of conquest. His grand object was to get a free and legal Parliament convened, to whose decision all questions, both public and private, should be left.

At this critical moment the public were astonished to learn that Sunderland had been suddenly dismissed from all his posts. "It is conceived," says Evelyn, "that he had of late grown remiss in pursuing the interests of the jesuitical counsels, some reported one thing, some another, but there was doubtless some secret which time may discover." James himself informed Barillon that Sutherland "was afraid," that he thwarted and offended his Majesty's most faithful servants, and that his services were no longer satisfactory. But there is no doubt that though his treason could not be proved by any tangible evidence, strong and well founded suspicions were entertained at court, that the minister was in constant communication with the Prince of Orange.

On the 16th of October the prince sailed from Helvoetsluys, accompanied by Marshal Schomberg, his second in command, and by Counts Solmes and Sturm, along with the earl of Macclesfield and Wiltshire, Lord Dumblane, Fletcher of Saltoun, and other British noblemen and gentlemen. The fleet set out with every prospect of making a short and prosperous voyage to the coast of England; but in the course of the night a change of wind brought on a storm so exceedingly violent as to scatter the ships in

all directions. The disappointment proved more severe than the actual loss; for the greater number of the vessels were enabled to return to their former anchorage, while the remainder found safety in the adjoining ports and havens. Burnet, who was on board, says, "Many ships were at first wanting and believed to be lost, but after a few days all came in. There was not one ship lost, nor so much as any one man, except one that was blown from the shrouds into the sea. Some ships were so shattered that as soon as they came in, and all was taken out of them, they immediately sunk down. Only five hundred horses died for want of air." After the necessary repairs were made, William again put to sea on the 1st of November, with a fair wind and a brisk gale. The armament during twelve hours steered towards the north-west for the purpose of creating a belief that a landing was to be attempted in Yorkshire. But when the light vessels sent out by the English admiral had carried back this erroneous information, the whole fleet tacked and made sail for the British Channel. On the morning of the 4th it reached Torbay, the place where William had all along intended to land. As the 4th was the anniversary of his birth and also of his marriage, he wished to land immediately, but the 5th being associated in the mind of the English people with the memory of a much greater event than either—the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot—it was deemed fortunate that the debarkation could not take place till that day.*

The reception of the liberator was at first not such as either to fulfil his expectations, or to hold out the hope of a brilliant issue to his enterprise; and had he been opposed with vigour, he would probably have been compelled to return to his ships. Instead of crowding to his standard, the people held aloof; and remembering with terror the recent butcheries of Jeffreys, they were unwilling to commit themselves in a cause where failure must have been visited with

the heaviest pains of law. William considered himself deceived if not betrayed, and was heard to express regret that he had yielded so readily to the solicitations of men, who seemed to have neither the power nor the inclination to keep their promises. But his safety was secured by the undecided conduct of the king, whose fears prevented him from adopting any measure calculated to give courage to his friends, or to intimidate such as were inclined to rise against him. The delay which occurred gave heart to those who had already drawn the sword, and induced others to join them. The first man of consequence who attempted to repair to the prince's standard was Lord Lovelace, a violent Whig, who tried to fight his way, at the head of his friends and tenants, through a strong body of the Gloucestershire militia stationed at Cirencester, but was overpowered and taken prisoner. Lord Colchester, son of Earl Rivers, Thomas Wharton, and Edward Russell, brother of the murdered patriot, Lord William, were more fortunate, and found their way to Exeter, where William now lay. They were followed by the earl of Abingdon, lord-lieutenant of Oxfordshire, who had been a supporter of the government in the days of the Exclusion bill. He was the first peer of the realm who made his appearance at the head-quarters of the Prince of Orange.

These examples of defection encouraged others to follow; and accordingly, in the course of a few days, many gentlemen in Devonshire and Somerset announced their adhesion to the prince. But among the dangers which now encompassed the unfortunate monarch, none was so alarming as his want of confidence in his own troops. His unsuccessful attempt to induce them to stand by him in his resolution to annul the test and penal laws, together with his employment of Irish recruits, had excited great discontent throughout the army, among all descriptions of the troops. The commander-in-chief, Lord Feversham, did

* *Exact Diary*, p. 28. Burnet, vol. iii p. 309.

not conceal from the king his apprehensions that an extensive desertion was likely to take place; and this fear was soon confirmed by the conduct of several individuals, whose attachment to the court was deemed immovable. Lord Churchill, afterwards the celebrated duke of Marlborough, who owed his elevation entirely to the favour of James, was the prime mover in the conspiracy which had spread its ramifications through the army. He had already, as we have seen, given in his adherence to William, but it was not yet time for him to declare himself. But Lord Cornbury, the eldest son of the earl of Clarendon, was completely under his influence, and was made his tool in a daring attempt to carry over to the enemy three regiments of dragoons, which were for a brief space under his command at Salisbury. Having failed, however, to accomplish this object he made his escape to the prince's quarters, carrying with him only a few troopers, whose fidelity to their master was not proof against such temptation.*

James was deeply affected by the tidings of Cornbury's defection. He called together the principal officers who were still in London, and entreated them not to imitate the shameful example of this young nobleman, at the same time offering to receive back their commissions if they were unwilling to fight for him. Although there were several traitors among them, they all protested that they were willing to shed the last drop of their blood in his cause, and relying on their fidelity the king set out for Salisbury, leaving a council of five lords, two of whom were Roman Catholics, to carry on the government in London during his absence. On the day on which he quitted the capital, the infant Prince of Wales was sent to Portsmouth.

When James reached Salisbury, on the 19th of November, evil tidings poured in upon him from all quarters. Sir William Portman, Sir Francis Warre, Edward Sey-

mour, and other wealthy and powerful land-owners had now repaired to Exeter. The earl of Bath, who commanded at Plymouth, had placed that important fortress and its garrison at the disposal of William. Lord Delamere had taken up arms in Cheshire. The earl of Danby by a dexterous manœuvre had obtained possession of York, and had drawn up a declaration in favour of the Prince of Orange, which in a few hours received the signatures of six peers, of five baronets,* of six knights, and many other influential gentlemen. The earl of Devonshire appeared in arms, at Derby, at the head of a great body of friends and dependents. The earls of Manchester, Stamford, Rutland, and Chesterfield, along with Lords Cholmondely and Grey de Ruthyn, assembled at Nottingham. But the severest blow of all was the desertion of Lord Churchill, who at this juncture, 24th November, fled to the prince's quarters, accompanied by the duke of Grafton, one of the illegitimate sons of Charles II.

This last example of treachery completely unmanned the unfortunate monarch, who believed that a design had been entertained of betraying him into the hands of the Prince of Orange. Orders were issued for an immediate retreat, and on the evening of that day the king reached Andover, attended by his son-in-law Prince George of Denmark, and the young duke of Ormond. The very next morning both the prince and the duke were missing. They had supped with the king, and as soon as they rose from the royal table they took horse and rode straight to Exeter, accompanied by Lord Drumlanrig, eldest son of the duke of Queensberry. Prince George had been in the habit of exclaiming when any news was told him, "Est-il-possible?" and had employed his usual phrase on hearing of the desertion of Churchill and Grafton. When James learned next morning that his son-in-law also had turned traitor, he merely remarked, "What! is 'Est-il-possible' gone too?" But next day when he reached London and found that his daughter Anne

* Clarendon, *Diary*. Macpherson, vol. 1. p. 289. *Life of James*, vol. ii. p. 215.

had fled in company with Lady Churchill and Compton, bishop of London, the unhappy monarch exclaimed in agony and with tears, "God help me! my very children have forsaken me."

James, thus deserted by those on whom he had most confidently relied, had no longer any regular plan of action, and seemed to resign himself to the current of events, which carried him from one expedient to another, without entertaining a precise object or waiting the result. He called a council of peers and bishops in the metropolis, by whose advice he prepared to issue writs for a new Parliament, and sent Lords Halifax, Nottingham, and Godolphin to treat with the Prince of Orange William, who dreaded the effects of a negotiation, refused to admit these commissioners to a personal conference, and sent the earls of Clarendon and Oxford, already devoted to his cause, to receive their proposals. The terms he himself offered to his father-in-law were universally regarded as extremely reasonable and moderate, and some of the leading Whigs who were averse to any reconciliation with James, complained that the proposals were much too liberal. But it is probable that the prince calculated on their rejection by James, and on the effect which this proof of the obstinacy and perversity of the monarch would produce on the public mind.

It is probable that James had no real wish to come to an arrangement with the prince, and that his only object in entering into negotiations was to gain time for sending his queen and infant son into France. With this view the child had been sent to Portsmouth, but Dartmouth who commanded there, though devoted to the royal cause, peremptorily refused to allow the heir-apparent to the British throne to be put into the hands of the French king. The infant prince was therefore brought back to London. But James was still obstinately bent on sending both his wife and child out of the kingdom, and with the assistance of the celebrated Count de

Lauzun, a French nobleman at that time residing in London, the queen and the infant prince, on the night of the 9th of December, amidst a storm of wind and rain crossed the river to Lambeth, whence they were conveyed in a coach to Gravesend. Here they embarked on board a yacht which was in waiting for them, and after a prosperous voyage they reached Calais in safety.

At three in the morning of the 11th, James himself quitted his palace by a secret passage, taking with him the Great Seal; and accompanied by Sir Edward Hales, drove in a hackney coach to Millwall, where he crossed the Thames in a small wherry, throwing the Great Seal into the river as he passed. Landing at Vauxhall, he found there a carriage and horses waiting for him, and he immediately took the road to Sheerness, where he expected to find a vessel to carry him to France.

Upon the king's flight England, which was for a short time without a government, was threatened with all the evils of tumult and insurrection. The multitude arose in various parts of the country, attacked the Roman Catholics, and destroyed their chapels. A great riot took place in London among the thieves and highwaymen, with whom were mingled thousands of idle apprentices and fierce enemies of popery, who demolished the Roman Catholic monasteries and places of worship, and ransacked and destroyed the mansions occupied by the Spanish ambassador, and by the ministers of the Elector Palatine and of the grand-duke of Tuscany. Feversham disbanded the army, and by thus letting loose a great number of men accustomed to the use of weapons, added much to the general disorder. In this alarming juncture the few peers who were in town assembled of their own accord to provide for the public safety; chose Halifax the speaker of their voluntary convention, gave directions to the mayor and aldermen for keeping the peace of the city; issued orders to the fleet and army; and entered into a correspondence with William, whose enterprise for the

liberties and religion of the kingdom they highly commended. In spite, however, of these efforts to preserve peace and order the agitation still continued, and was heightened by the capture of the infamous Jeffreys, who had disguised himself as a common sailor from Newcastle, and taken refuge in an ale-house at Wapping. Though he had shaved away his eye-brows and his dress was black with coal-dust, he was recognized by a scrivener whom he had grossly insulted and abused in a case which was tried in his court. A furious mob at once assembled, and would have torn him to pieces but for the intervention of a company of the train band, who carried him before the lord mayor. As his life was in imminent danger the terror-stricken chancellor begged to be sent to prison, and he was conveyed to the Tower under the protection of two regiments of militia, who with great difficulty saved the miserable carter from the fury of the savage mob. A false report was spread abroad at this crisis, that the Irish soldiers whom Feversham had disbanded were marching on London, for the purpose of plundering and massacring the citizens. The greatest alarm in consequence prevailed. The people hastily ran to arms, barricaded the principal streets, and prepared to defend their lives and property against the expected enemy. Next day it was discovered that a false alarm had been raised not only in London, but in many other towns, by means of letters and of men disguised as rustics. But the authors of this disgraceful hoax were never discovered.

But while these things were in progress, news arrived that James, intercepted in his flight, was on his way to London. On the morning of the 12th he had reached Emley Ferry, near the island of Sheppey, where the hoy lay in which he was to sail. He immediately went on board, but it blew a strong gale, and the master of the vessel ran into the western end of the isle to obtain more ballast. Some boatmen boarded the vessel in search of Jesuits and of plunder, and carried the passengers on shore

that they might be examined by a magistrate. The disguised king was an object of special suspicion. One of the rabble exclaimed, "It is Father Petre, I know him by his lean jaws;" "Search the hatchet-faced old Jesuit," exclaimed another. The unfortunate monarch was treated with great rudeness, and robbed of his money and watch. He was rescued from the hands of this mob of fishermen, sailors, and smugglers, but his mind seemed completely shattered by his misfortunes. He alternately threatened and implored, told the mob that the Prince of Orange was seeking his life, and cried out, "Let me go, get me a boat. If you do not let me fly now, it will be too late." As soon as the council heard the news of the detention and rough treatment to which the king had been subjected, they sent Lord Feversham with a troop of the life guards to protect him and set him at liberty. He was first of all removed to Rochester, where he took some rest, and then, in compliance with the urgent request of some of his friends who saw that a last chance was still left him, he returned to London, and on the 16th of December once more took up his residence in Whitehall. As if to show that the lessons of adversity were utterly thrown away upon him, on the day of his arrival he went to mass, and then dining in public, grace was said at the royal table by a Jesuit.

William was deeply mortified at this unexpected and unwelcome occurrence, and returned a cold and stern reply to his request that the prince would grant him a personal interview. The wish of William and his councillors was that James should leave the country, but, as he made no attempt to reinstate himself in power, the friends of the prince found no apology for employing force against him, however much they might be inclined to drive him to extremities.

To quicken James' resolution to seek an asylum on the Continent the English guards were withdrawn, and the Dutch soldiers occupied Whitehall. It was then notified to him that he must quit the palace, and

repair to Ham, a house on the Thames, near Richmond, belonging to the duchess-dowager of Lauderdale. He objected that the place was cold and comfortless in winter, and expressed his preference for Rochester, which¹ was both more salubrious and more convenient. His desire was at once acceded to by the prince, whose first wish was that James should leave the country, and the journey to Rochester was evidently a step towards France. James was accompanied thither by a guard of Dutch soldiers, whose instructions, whilst they enjoined the utmost vigilance as to his intercourse at home, were not meant to prevent his escape to foreign parts. Finding himself neglected by all orders of his subjects—nobility, and commons, civilians and ecclesiastics—he soon came to the determination which his friends now wished him to adopt, and on the 23rd of December, 1688, he privately went on board a smack which waited for him, and after an easy voyage landed in safety at Ambletuse on the French coast.

The abdication of James put an end to that struggle between faction and despotism which had distracted England during more than twenty years. From the period that Charles II began to quarrel with his Parliament, the government lost its balance, and the leading politicians on both sides were seen to act from personal motives, rather than from fixed principle, being more eager to gratify their resentment or their avarice, than to promote the welfare of their country. The conduct of Shaftesbury and other patriots, who relinquished the advantages of office, in which their services were no longer acceptable, to assume the labours of the demagogue, and accept from a foreign tyrant the pay of traitors, destroyed all confidence in the professions of public men. In addition to the most shameful apostasy, too, there was displayed the most atrocious con-

spiracy against the characters and even the lives of their opponents. The legal murders which originated in the popish plot, and the horrid perjuries by which they were consummated, disgraced both parties, for while the enemies of the court urged accusations which they could not fail to know were entirely false, the ministers of the crown, on the other hand, connived at numerous unjust sentences, which they could not oppose without weakening their own influence with the mass of the people. To the seditious machinations of the popular party, at the epoch of the Rye-house combination, may be ascribed the ascendancy of those despotic maxims, which enabled the king to suppress the rising spirit of liberty during the remainder of his reign, and which, in fact, ultimately led to that irresistible reaction whence sprang the downfall of his brother from the throne, and the sufferings of his family. A prudent ruler, indeed, might have perpetuated the despotic power which James inherited, and accustomed the nation to the exercise of a more limited freedom than that to which they attained at the accession of William. But the inroads which he made on the constitution, and the designs he meditated against the Protestant faith, hurried on a crisis for which he was unprepared, and which, under the direction of a good Providence, afforded an opportunity for the adjustment of those portions of the political fabric which had been disturbed or displaced by the agitations of a protracted contest.*

* Besides the more common works on this portion of English history, we recommend to the reader Mazure, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1688*, in three volumes, 1825. An Historical Essay on the real Character and Amount of the Precedent of the Revolution of 1688, by R. Plumer Ward, Esq., two volumes, 1888. History of the Revolution of 1688, by Sir James Mackintosh. D'Oyley, *Life of Sancroft*, two volumes, 1821. This work deserves attention, for the account given of the archbishop's conduct when called before King James to answer the charges in William's Declaration. Vaughan, *Memorials of the Stewart Dynasty*, two volumes, 1881. Macaulay's *History of England*, vol. II.

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

BY

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CHAPTER I.

IN the survey which we propose to take of English Literature, we mean to confine ourselves to much narrower limits than belong to the term "Literature," etymologically or philosophically. We shall not deal with all written thought, nor even with all thought artistically expressed. Our view will be confined to what is popularly called Literature—"the assemblage of those works which are neither addressed to particular classes, nor use words merely as the signs of *things*, but which, treating of subjects that interest man as man, and using words as the vehicles and exponents of *thoughts*, appeal to the general human intellect and to the common human heart." We shall thus exclude from consideration all compositions purely professional, belonging merely to art or science, save so far as they may illustrate style or language.

Before entering on our subject, it will be necessary to devote a few words—for the limited space at our disposal will permit of no more—to the origin and progress of the language which has been the vehicle of that literature. Taking, then, our language at the period when it assumed the shape that is usually called *Anglo-Saxon*, we find its principal constituents to be the Low German and Scandinavian branches of the Teutonic, with some remains of the Celtic, the speech of those whom the immigrants had driven into the fastnesses of Wales; to these may be added, though to a very small extent, the language of the Roman conquerors, who had long since abandoned the

country. And so the language continued till the Norman conquest in the eleventh century introduced the civilization and the speech of Norman-French, which was destined ultimately to exercise so large an influence on the English language, introducing changes indicated by the terms *Semi-Saxon* and *English*. The conflict between the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman-French was, however, of long duration, for the mass of the people adhered to the former, and forced the latter to learn and retain it. It held its ground as the national tongue, absorbing gradually into itself that of the Norman settlers, till the latter became thoroughly assimilated in the life and system of the nation's speech. And so it remained till Chaucer and his contemporaries fixed the language, which, notwithstanding the modifications it has since undergone from the influence of French, Italian, and German, as well as Greek and Latin literature, has substantially continued up to the present to be the language of England.

Corresponding to this brief view, the late Professor Craik, in his able "History of the English Literature and Language," has adopted three divisions or epochs to designate the principal changes which our language has undergone—the first, which he calls the period of Pure or simple English, terminating in the eleventh century at the Conquest; the second, that of broken or Semi-English, covering the time from the Conquest till the appearance of Chaucer in the fourteenth century; and the last, that of Mixed or com-

posite English, commencing with Chaucer and continuing to our own time.

The progress of change in the language may be somewhat differently indicated, as follows--

From A D	450 to 1150—Anglo-Saxon
"	1150 to 1250—Semi-Saxon.
"	1250 to 1350—Old English
"	1350 to 1550—Middle English
"	1550 to the present—Modern English

So far of our language. Let us now turn to our *literature*. Professor Moiley assumes four divisions in its history, founded, as he states, upon historical accidents affecting to a most remarkable extent fashions of speech. 1 That of the formation of the language, ending with Chaucer. 2 That of Italian influence, felt even in Chaucer's day, but more fairly inaugurated by the "company of courtly makers" who preceded the age of Elizabeth. 3 That of French influence, of which the beginning is marked strongly by a change in the style of Dryden subsequent to the "Annus Mirabilis." And 4. That of English popular influence, which was established gradually, but which should be dated from De Foe.

Such divisions, both in relation to language and to literature, are no doubt highly convenient for the purposes of classification and reference; and though they may be to some extent conventional or arbitrary, they are upon the whole just and philosophical. But in truth no such sharply-defined boundaries really exist, and the epochs blend into each other as they meet, in the same manner as do the colours of the prism. The progress of the literature of a country is as a continuous stream. It may at times be deeper or shallower, broader or narrower, more or less rapid, more or less agitated, more or less clear and pure, more or less direct or tortuous, returning sometimes, as it were, upon itself, or beaten back in its course by opposing influences, swoln often by affluents that join it; yet still it goes on insensibly changing in character, increasing in volume, in force, bearing upon its bosom the noblest freight, the thoughts and the words of great

men. One thing, however, is true of all literature, and eminently true of our own; it must ever take its colouring from the mind and feeling of the people, though in its turn it exercises an influence on the popular heart. But this latter influence is often more apparent than real; more a reflected than an actual power. So the river is coloured by the soil through which it wears its way; and though it freshens the herbage and increases the fertility of its banks, yet the forests and mountains and rocks which are seen upon its waters are but the reflection of the country through which it flows.

But though the Anglo-Saxon became a fixed national tongue as early as the end of the fifth century, its literature did not commence till about a century after. Up to this period the literature of England found its exponent in the Latin, the organ of the Christian church; and in the Celtic, of which there were three forms—the Erse of Ireland, the Gaelic of Scotland, and the Cymric of Wales. Nor did these disappear when Englishmen began to compose in their native tongue. The Latin long continued to be the organ in which learned men disseminated, as a common medium of communication with Europe, their thoughts and knowledge. And the names of Alcuin, John Scotus (Erigena), Bede, and others, are famous by their Latin compositions, not only in our own country, but through the world.

The first literary efforts of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, like that of most other tongues, took the shape of verse. While the transmission of knowledge by writing was yet difficult, men adopted that form of composition which would best lay hold of the memory, and accordingly adopted some artifice whereby words would be suggested in a sequence and retained in the mind. Hence arose various metrical forms which assumed the character of a chant or a song. The earliest used by the Anglo-Saxons was an alliterative system, as distinguished from syllabic quantity; that is, "when in two immediately successive and connected lines there occur three words beginning with the

same letter, and so that the third or last word stands first in the second line, and the two others are in the first line."

Perhaps the oldest specimen of Anglo-Saxon poetry that is extant is "The Traveller's Song," which, it is conjectured, was composed in the first half of the fifth century; but the most important relic of that literature is the heroic poem entitled "Beowulf," which the labours of British antiquarians, and especially of the late learned John Mitchell Kemble, have made familiar to all philological students. To his edition of the poem, in two volumes, 1835-1837, we must refer the reader who desires to make acquaintance with that interesting poem. A few lines from this composition, rendered into modern English by Professor Morley, in accordance with its method of alliterative versification, will show the nature of that verse. The melody is regulated, not by quantity, as in classic poetry, but by the syllabic emphasis of alliteration.

Better known is the sacred poem composed in the seventh century by CÆDMON, who has been justly called the Anglo-Saxon Milton. We learn from Bede that, when the famous Hilda was abbess of Whitby, a Christian convert entered that monastery, one "specially distinguished by divine grace, for he used to make songs apt to religion and piety." The account of his miraculous inspiration is highly interesting, but partakes too much of the fabulous. Cædmon became a monk, studied sacred history, and composed his great epic, in which, as Professor Morley observes, "will be found the soul of nearly all that is Saxon in our literature." The fame of this paraphrase spread into France, and numerous and elaborate copies were made of it. Mr. Thorpe's edition of Cædmon, with an English translation and notes, will enable the reader to appreciate the high merits of this fine religious poem. Other poems there were of less note, which we need not refer to, chiefly upon sacred subjects; and thus a large mass of national poetry was collected and transmitted either orally from memory

or multiplied by copies. Up to this time there was no prose literature in Anglo-Saxon. The ecclesiastics wrote in Latin, but in their compositions there was ever to be seen the English mind, and the expression of the spirit of the race, to which they belonged. This is apparent in the Chronicles of Gildas, of Aldhelm, and of Bede. The two last wrote also in their native tongue. The former translated the Psalms, and the latter was, at the time of his death, engaged in translating St John's Gospel into Anglo-Saxon, and we may observe, too, that he is to be included amongst our native poets, for St Cuthbert relates "that he was very learned in our songs, and putting his thoughts into English verse."

For the great KING ALFRED was reserved the glory of being the largest contributor to the prose of his native tongue, enriching it with original compositions and translations from the Latin works of Bede and others, so that thenceforth the Anglo-Saxon grew into repute with scholars. When, after many adventures, perils, and battles, Alfred in 871, being then twenty-two years old, was raised to the throne of the West Saxons, he had still years of contention and warfare before he had subdued the English Danes. The moment he felt secure on his throne, he applied himself to the improvement of his people and the restoration of native literature. Great as his labours were in other directions, he found time to labour in the interests of literature with a zeal and ability that were marvellous. He found, as he tells us, "that there are only a few on this side of the Humber who can understand the Divine Service or even explain a Latin epistle in English." Accordingly he associated with him many learned men, amongst whom was Asser, who was afterwards reputed to be his biographer. Devoting himself to study with great perseverance, he next undertook to write for his people. In order to instruct them in ancient history, he translated into English the historical work of Orosius, and Bede's "History of the Anglo-Saxon Church" (at all events that work is generally attributed to him). Many other

contributions to Anglo-Saxon literature are from his pen, some few original, but most of them translations; amongst the latter of which is his well-known translation of Boethius's treatise, "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*." He wrote with great spirit and vigour, and in point of style his compositions are esteemed the purest specimens of Anglo-Saxon prose. There is no proof that he wrote verse, for there is strong reason to doubt that the poetry attributed to him was his composition. History presents to us no grander spectacle than that of this king, who had won his way to the throne through blood, becoming, amid the cares of state and the distractions of his country, the schoolmaster of his people, till, in the words of Fuller, "he left learning where he found ignorance, justice where he found oppression, and peace where he found distraction." Others took up the good work that Alfred had begun. Amongst them we may note ALDRED, called "the Glossator;" ÆTHELWALD, bishop of Winchester, ÆLFRIC, archbishop of Canterbury, or "the Grammarian," who besides writing an Anglo-Saxon grammar and other books for instructing the people in their native tongue, translated most of the books of the Old Testament. These, and some poems to be found in the Saxon Chronicle, bring us down to the time of the Norman Conquest.

Before William of Normandy won from Harold the English throne, in 1066, and brought with him his countrymen to settle on English soil, no small intercourse had existed between the two peoples. Louis IV. of France, with his mother, the daughter of the Anglo-Saxon Athelstane, had sojourned in England, and Harold in Normandy, both as exiles. Intermarriages had taken place between their princes. Robert the Magnificent, the father of William the Conqueror, had married the sister of Canute, and Ethelred II. took to wife Emma, the daughter of Richard, duke of Normandy; and their two children, one of whom was Edward the Confessor, were sent to their mother's country to be educated. To this circum-

stance, indeed, is to be attributed that monarch's partiality to French manners and language, both of which he encouraged in his own realm. The English soil was therefore not unprepared for the reception of the language of their invaders. To the Anglo-Saxons in the higher and educated grades the tongue of the Northmen was familiar; and the people found in the Norse language much that was intelligible as derived from a common Scandinavian origin. And thus it happened that in the conflict between the two languages, the Anglo-Saxon became the framework round which the Norman tongue gathered and intertwined, resulting at last in that pure "well of English undefiled" which found its illustrious exponent in Geoffrey Chaucer. Great, too, was the accession to our literature resulting from the Conquest. "That event," as Professor Craik observes, "made England as it were part of the Continent, where not long before a revival of letters had taken place." And so learning flowed in not only from France and Italy, but from the remote East and Arabia, through Spain. The universities on the Continent interchanged teachers and pupils with those of England, which had grown up from schools into colleges; and, finally, the Crusades let in a flood of light upon men who had heretofore travelled little beyond their native soil, and who on their return brought with them enlarged views of life and increased knowledge.

But to resume. For some time after the Conquest, most of the literary works in England were composed either in Latin or in Norman French. The trouvères had brought with them from Normandy the spirit of their songs of romance and chivalry, so distinct in their character from the love songs of the southern troubadours in dialect and in sentiment. These warrior minstrels, as brave in the field as they were nervous in song, commemorated in their poems the "gestes" or deeds of kings and heroes; and though the themes of many of them were English, the language of the song was the Norman-French. Of these, one of the earliest is the romance of Havelok, another

the "Gest of King Horn." To these we must add the series of romances relating to King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. All these, though not English literature in the sense in which we are treating the subject—that is, literature in the English tongue—have a most important bearing upon it as being the germ from which much English literature was developed. In truth, but little of English poetry, and, with the exception of the Saxon Chronicle carried on by various hands, less of prose is to be found up to the end of the twelfth century; but it is to be observed that our poetry underwent one remarkable change during this period, namely, in the gradual transition in popular songs from the alliterative rhythm, through a rude and imperfect unrhymed ballad metre, to the rhymed couplet and stanza. The commencement of the thirteenth century is marked by the "Brut" or Chronicle of Britain, composed in the Anglo-Saxon of the period, by LAYAMON, a priest of Ernley on the Severn. He tells us he compiled his poem from three sources, a book in English by Bede, one in Latin by St Albin, and the "Brut d'Angleterre" in Norman-French by Wace. It professes to be a history of Britain from the arrival of Brutus to the death of Cadwalader, A.D. 689, and embraces much of the romantic history of King Arthur. The MS. was translated into modern English by Sir Frederick Madden in 1847. Apart from its literary and poetic merits, this is a poem of great philological interest. It exhibits the changes the language underwent since the sixth century, both in its inflexions and the introduction of auxiliary verbs, thus becoming less synthetic and more analytic—less pure and more mixed. We notice, too, the influence of the French literature in the introduction of occasional rhymes amongst the old alliterative forms, though, strange to say, Sir Frederick Madden asserts that in this poem of over thirty-two thousand lines, there are less than fifty words derived from the Normans. Layamon is considered the first of the series of writers of rhyming chronicles and metrical romances, which the labours of Percy, Ritson, Warton, Ellis,

and many others, have brought to light and annotated. "The history of the English metrical romances," says Professor Craik, "appears shortly to be, that at least the first examples of it were translations from the French; that there is no evidence of any such having been produced before the close of the twelfth century; that in the thirteenth century were composed the earliest of those we now possess in their original form; that in the fourteenth century the English took the place of the French metrical romance, with all classes; and that this was the era alike of its highest ascendancy, and of its most abundant and felicitous production."

Of the rhyming chroniclers we may note ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER, ROBERT MANNYNG or DE BRUNNE, and LAWRENCE MINOT, which brings us to the middle of the fourteenth century. The poetical merits of this class of writing are small, but they possess interest as specimens of language and versification. They are all in rhyme; the first in lines of fourteen syllables, or resolvable into lines of eights and sixes, the latter being the rhyming ones. The second is written in short trochaics, and the third, which shows a great advance in art and smoothness, is in stanzas of six lines; the rhymes being formed by the first and second, the fourth and fifth, and the third and sixth.* Many legends and sacred poems, mostly in verse, were composed during this period, and some love songs not devoid of imagination and spirit.

We have now passed through the darkness, illumined, no doubt, by many a bright star, and the twilight comes and the dawn that is to precede the morning. Down to the time of Edward III. the two languages ran indeed in the same channel, but forming currents distinguishable, if not separate, and blending gradually. The Norman-French—the language of the schools and of the court—disturbed the inflections and articulations of the tongue of the English people,

* We have a song on the battle of Cressy by Minot, in iambics, the stanza consisting of eight lines of alternate rhymes, with this peculiarity, that the fifth line also rhymes with the fourth, thus giving but three rhymes in the stanza.

which, in its turn, enlarged the vocabulary and modified the grammar of the former. The language, substantially Anglo-Saxon, accepted these modifications, but it is impossible to fix a precise time in which the Anglo-Saxon ceased and the English began. It may, however, be safely asserted that early in the fourteenth century the language had attained a composite form in which the Norman element blended with the Anglo-Saxon, giving, as the result, what is termed the mixed or compound middle English. And now writers arose who developed the resources of our tongue. The movement came first from the clergy. WILLIAM OF SHOREHAM translated the Psalter into English. RICHARD ROLLE, of Hampole, versified the Psalms and wrote religious poetry. SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE translated his book of travels from the Latin into English. JOHN WYCLIFFE wrote controversial tracts for the people, and made the first English translation of the Bible, a work which, apart from its value in a religious point of view, exhibits a great advance in the composition of English. The muse took up the inspiration, and LANGLANDE, about the year 1362, produced his celebrated poem of the "Vision of Piers Plowman," which enjoyed a long and deserved popularity. It contains a lively description of the social condition, the manners, and the religious thought of the time, which was then fermenting in the minds of the people. It exercised a great influence upon our language, and is written in clear nervous English, in which the Teutonic element is prevalent. It is remarkable, too, in this, that it rejects the use of the rhymes and reverts to that of alliteration. This work, so eminently original, deserves some special notice. The author, or supposed author, for it is by no means certain who the author was, is said to have been Robert or William Langlande, a monk who resided near Malvern. He was evidently a man of vivid imagination, and of strict and high notions on the subject of religion. He wrote for the people and in the tongue which the people still loved; and as we read his poem we recognize the ring of the

old verse of Cædmon. The vehicle in which he conveys his thoughts is that of allegory, the vision, or series of visions which came over him when he fell asleep "on a May morwenynge," among the Malvern hills; and by it he speaks to the highest as well as to the lowliest with singular power and vivacity. Like the "Pilgrim's Progress" of Bunyan, which it resembles in subject if not in treatment, it details, in an allegory, the impediments and temptations which beset the crusade of this mortal life. The whole is a pungent satire against the corruptions of the church, the hypocrisy, worldliness, ignorance, and sensuality of its ministers, and an exposure of the vices and abuses of all sorts. "So, through the turmoil and disaster of his time, wherewith the poem ends, the poet sends his last thought heavenward, and builds his last hope for the world upon a search for Christ."

Whoever desires to make an intimate acquaintance with this remarkable poem may avail himself of the learned labours of Mr Wright, who has made it accessible and intelligible to ordinary readers in his valuable edition. So popular was this work that it revived the taste for alliterative verse, and arrested for a time the growing tendency for the use of Anglo-Norman forms of composition. This is evident in the many imitations that followed, two of which, "The Creed of Piers Plowman" and "The Complaint of the Plowman," are to be noted.

We omit to mention many names in English literature of this period, as our object is to mark its changes and progress by the representative writers, and not to give a catalogue of authors.

Let us pass into the bright morning light, from the twilight to its dawn, the daylight whose sun is GEOFFREY CHAUCER, the period from which we may date, if not the origin, most assuredly the establishment of the English tongue as a living, vigorous language, with a vital strength that has sustained it in its growth through a vigorous youth to a manhood that is yet in its prime. Let us consider what Chaucer did both for the language and the versification

of the English tongue. We have already seen how the old and the new forms of speech were gradually intermingling—how nevertheless, they were, as yet, kept from a perfect fusion. "When the national spirit was aroused," observes a distinguished American writer, "and impelled to the creation of a national literature, the poet or prose writer, in selecting his diction, had almost the two vocabularies before him. That the syntax should be English, national feeling demanded; but French was so familiar and habitual to all who were able to read, that probably the scholarship of the day would scarcely have been able to determine, with respect to a large proportion of the words in common use, from which of the two great wells of speech they had proceeded." Happily a great arbiter arose at this critical moment, to decide what share of the contributions of France should be permanently annexed to the linguistic inheritance of Englishmen. There is much uncertainty about the biographical details of Geoffrey Chaucer. The place and time of his birth are doubtful, but it took place probably about 1328, and in London. Cambridge and Oxford each claim him as an alumnus, and it may be that he studied at both. He moved in the circle of the court, was no doubt a man of birth, for he married the sister-in-law of John of Gaunt, with whose fortunes he connected himself. He served with Edward III. in the invasion of France, where he was taken prisoner. He was one of the king's esquires, and most likely was educated for the law, served in Parliament, went to France and Italy on missions, and probably became acquainted with Petrarch in the latter country. So much as to the man's external life, for everything that appertains to him is of undying interest. But it is with the poet-life of the great father of our English literature that we have to do. We have already indicated what was the state of the English tongue at this period. Let us see what were the metrical forms of our poetry. We had the alliterative rhythm still in use, and we had introduced rhymes also. The metri-

cal forms were, according to Tyrwhitt, first, the long iambic of fourteen or fifteen syllables, broken by a cæsura at the eighth syllable; second, the Alexandrine of twelve or thirteen syllables, with the cæsura at the sixth; third, the octosyllabic; and fourth, the six verse stanza, of which the first, second, fourth, and fifth were in complete octosyllabic metre, while the third and sixth were catalectic. Such in vocabulary and metre was the literature which Chaucer came to deal with. Mr. Marsh has justly observed that "Chaucer did not introduce into the English language words which it had rejected as *aliens* before, but out of those which had been already received he invested the better portion with the rights of citizenship, and stamped them with the mint-mark of English coinage. In this way he formed a vocabulary which, with few exceptions, the taste and opinion of succeeding generations has approved, and a literary diction was thus established which, in all the qualities required for the poetic art, had at that time no superior in the language of modern Europe." Every reader of his works, who has any philological knowledge, must be struck with the fine tact with which Chaucer uses the French accessions to our vocabulary, especially for the purposes of rhyme, and the masterly nerve and vigour of his Saxon words. Indeed, it has been well said that he was "a genuine product of the union of Saxon and Norman genius, and the first well-characterized specimen of the intellectual results of a combination which has given to the world a literature so splendid and a history so noble." In his application of the metrical forms which we have above enumerated, Chaucer availed himself but little of the first, second, or fourth. In the third he left several compositions. By far the greater part of his works are in what we now call the heroic metre, either in distich or stanza, and Tyrwhitt inclines to the belief that to him we owe the introduction of this measure from France and Italy. Though many of the minor poems of Chaucer are of high poetic merit, his fame is based imperishably on "The Canterbury

Tales" The poet feigns that he met at the Tabard Inn, in the borough of Southwark, some nine and twenty folk, intending, like himself, to go on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. These various persons are representations of different classes and professions, each of whom is described with marvellous discrimination of character and with much humour, as well as with a keen and pleasant satire, especially when touching on the laxity and vices of ecclesiastics, so that they remain to this day the most faith-worthy and vivid portraits of characters that belong to the past. The host, himself a right merry and shrewd man, proposes that when they set out on the morrow, each shall tell a tale on the way, and the narrator of the best tale should on their return have a supper at the cost of the rest. The work, we may conclude, was never completed, as we have but twenty-four tales and the prologues. Of these all are in verse, with the exception of "The tale of Melibeus," and "The Persones Tale;" and all are in heroic measure except "The Tale of Sir Thopas," which is in the octosyllabic stanza of six lines, the fourth measure alluded to by Tyrwhitt. Of the heroic verse we have three kinds, the distich, in which the prologues and the majority of the tales are composed, the seven-line stanza of "The Clerk's Tale" and "The Seconde Nonne's Tale," and the eight-lined stanza of "The Monkes Tale." These two forms are exceedingly harmonious, and we venture to suggest that from the latter, by the addition of a final Alexandrine line, Spenser formed the noble stanza which is known by his name.

The authenticity of many of the minor poems attributed to Chaucer has of late been seriously questioned. A German critic, Bernhard Ten Brink, in his work "Chaucer: Studien zur Geschichte seiner Entwicklung und zur Chronologie seiner Schriften, 1870," asserts, and with a strong show of reason, that the following are incorrectly attributed to our poet:—"The Testament of Love," "The Flower and the Leaf," "Chaucer's Dream," "The Court

of Love," "The Complaint of the Black Knight," "The Lamentation of Mary Magdaleine," "The Assemblie of Ladies," and "The Remedie of Love." If this assertion turn out to be well founded, some bright jewels shall disappear from the crown of Chaucer. But the crown, golden and studded with the most lustrous and precious gems, remains, the badge of sovereignty which can never be ravished from him. And indeed at no time has the sovereignty of Chaucer been disputed. His contemporaries did homage to him as their literary lord. Lydgate calls him "the chief poete of Bretayne," and the "lode-sterre" of our language, acknowledging him to be the first "to distil and rain the gold dew-drops of speech and eloquence" into our tongue. Occleve styles him "the fynder of our fayre langage." Gower, a congenial spirit, whose genius came the nearest to him in his own day, did him all honour; and when he had passed away, each succeeding age affirmed the praise of his own. Roger Ascham speaks of him as "the English Homer," and Spenser as "the pure well-head of poetry," and "the well of English undefiled," and so might we quote many another great name which has owned allegiance to him. In truth this great poet seems to have received in affluent measure all the divine gifts which concur so rarely, and when they do, meet to make a perfect bard. An ardent love and appreciation of nature in her varied charms that speak to every sense, sight and sound, field and flower, the harmonies of birds, the odour of all the fairest things that bloom on the earth, the glory of all the brightest things that shine in the heavens, a profound knowledge of man's nature, an exquisite instinct of discrimination, a dramatic power broad and deep, a vivid force of portraiture, wit, humour, satire, passion, pathos, and a strength of vigorous and condensed expression that was truly Dantesque, as genial as a spring day, as fresh now as he was five hundred years ago. Upon the theory of the versification of Chaucer we do not mean to enter. The controversy has been carried on since

the days of Tyrwhitt to the present. Of one fact, however, we must express our deep conviction, that when we shall have got the right key to the pronunciation of Chaucer's verse, it will be found perfectly harmonious *

It would alike transcend our limits and our object to go into a critical examination of the works of Chaucer. The plots of a great number of them are taken from French and Italian tales. Some of them are manifestly translations, amplified and improved, and many of them are, so far as we know, entirely original. Throughout them all we see the genius of Chaucer shining more or less brightly.

But Chaucer was not alone in his good work. Right worthy fellow labourers had he in the forming and beautifying our language Wycliffe, Mandeville, and others, we have already alluded to. One there is, born about the same time as Chaucer, who deserves special notice—JOHN GOWER, "the moral Gower," as his friend Chaucer calls him, of whose life little is known, but whose poetical compositions entitle him to a high place among our early writers, though far beneath his great contemporary. He wrote, besides the "*Speculum Meditantis*" in French, and the "*Vox Clamantis*" in Latin, and short pieces in both these tongues, an English poem, the "*Confessio Amantis*," which with the others forms a trilogy. This work, of which many manuscripts are extant, has been frequently edited, and recently by Dr Reinhold Pauli. It is composed in rhymed distichs of octosyllabic iambs, and is in eight books. It is a very favourable specimen in orthography and vocabulary of the progress made in our tongue. Warton observes that if Chaucer had not existed, the compositions of Gower would have been sufficient to rescue the reigns of Edward III and Richard II from the imputation of barbarism. In the sister kingdom, too, the same influences were at work. And

here, too, the poet was the refiner. JOHN BARBOUR, archdeacon of Aberdeen, may justly be reckoned next to Chaucer. He studied both at Oxford and in France, and composed two poems, one "*The Brut*," a genealogical history of the kings of Scotland, the other "*The Bruce*," relating to the fortunes of the great King Robert I. especially, while chronicling Scotch history. The poem is in the prevalent metre—the octosyllabic rhymed couplets. Walter Scott, by his frequent references and quotations, has made this book more familiar to general readers than it would otherwise have been. His English is strong, nervous, pure, and harmonious. With Chaucer and his contemporaries we may appropriately pause in our survey, as therein concur two of those conventional epochs to which we have alluded in the commencement of our essay; the one in relation to our language, the other to our literature, both of which may be conveniently fixed at the end of the fourteenth century. Here we find the language assuming the form variously called the middle, or mixed, or composite English, and our literature, after having passed through the various modifications and been subjected to the manifold influences which we have briefly endeavoured to trace, emerging into a literary excellence that gives it a permanency and position in the world's literature. We pause, but, as has been truly observed, there is no break in the continuity of English thought. The stream has been running through centuries; through centuries we have yet to follow it with the throb of the English heart ever agitating it and keeping it fresh, and the life-blood of English mind ever colouring its waters.

CHAPTER II

THE stream that had been running with such brightness and animation is now destined to flow for a season dull and languidly through the fifteenth century. The condition of the nation, troubled with feuds within

* Little more than two years ago "The Chaucer Society" was founded for the purpose of printing the best existing MSS of his works. Much still remains to be done for the full elucidation of the poet's language

and wars without, will no doubt in part account for this Literature, whether in the seed or the plant, will not thrive when the elements are troubled or the soil is disturbed. Excitement, it is true, may stimulate it for a moment to an unhealthy development, but it will be feeble and transient. It is the golden showers, and the gentle winds, and the genial sun, that ripen and mature it. So it happens that, while in Italy and Germany the light was spreading from the East, and classical learning was reviving through the Continent under the influence of the dispersed Greeks, the illumination had not yet reached England. In Oxford the study of Greek was not introduced till late in the fifteenth century; and though printing was invented by Koster, and type used by him at Haarlem as early as 1438, the first press was not established in England till William Caxton set up one in Westminster Abbey in 1471.* "I can assign," says Dr Warton in his "History of English Poetry," "only one poet to the reign of Henry IV." This was JOHN WALTON, called Johannes Capellanus, or John the chaplain, who translated the "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*" of Boethius into English verse. Nor is the estimate of Hallam more favourable. "After the death of Chaucer in 1400," he observes in his "Literature of Europe," "a dreary blank of long duration occurs in our annals." This gloom is but faintly enlightened in the reign of Henry V. by THOMAS OCCLEVE, whose verses, feeble, graceless, and pedantic, are only redeemed by rising to something like poetic feeling when his heart is stirred by the memory of his model and master, Chaucer (whose portrait he drew), and by the correctness of his diction. Better far was JOHN LYDGATE, a monk of Bury, who, though tortuous and diffuse, possessed the qualities of ease and sprightliness, and was not devoid of a certain wit and humour. Indeed, the poet Gray did not hold Lydgate in such light esteem as do some of our more modern critics. Warton, too, speaks of him as a man of lively genius

* A book has been accidentally discovered with the date 1468, Oxford

and humorous accomplishments; as not only a poet and philologist, but also a rhetorician, geometrician, astronomer, and theologian. His highest merit, however, in relation to literature, is that he is the first of our writers whose style possesses that perspicuous phraseology which makes him easily intelligible to readers of our own times.

The minor poetry of this century is sufficiently abundant, but its merits are small. There are several devotional pieces, whose only claim to the title of poetry is their versification.

In the reign of Henry VI. we have some metrical romances translated from the French, as HUGH CAMPDEN's translation of "*Sidrae*" and THOMAS CHESTER's "*Sir Laurlfel*." These were among the latest of the metrical romances, which were gradually superseded by ballad poetry and romances in prose. Of these last SIR THOMAS MALLOREY's "*Byrth, Lyfe, and Actes of Kyng Arthur*," usually styled the "*Morte d'Arthur*," is one of the most charming of ancient heroic fictions. It is written in vigorous yet simple English, with many good Teutonic words, is animated and tender, highly picturesque, and occasionally eloquent.

Let us turn to Scotland, and we shall see that she was not silent. It was early in this century that her universities of St. Andrews and Glasgow were founded, and later that of Aberdeen. Scotland contributed in quality, if not in quantity, more than her quota to the literature of the period. ANDREW WYNTOWN, prior of the monastery of St. Serfs, in Lochleven, was no unworthy successor of Barbour, though considerably his inferior in poetic feeling. His "*Originale Chronykil of Scotland*," written in the usual octosyllabic rhymed distich, consists of nine books (a portion of which is the work of a fellow-labourer), and is a valuable historical narrative. But pre-eminently the best poet of his day was JAMES I. of Scotland. The romantic history of this prince is well known. Captured in his tenth year when on his way to France, he was kept a prisoner in Windsor Castle till 1423. It was here, while solacing his

captivity by the acquisition of learning and the accomplishments of the age, that he fell in love with Lady Jane Beaufort, whom he saw walking in the garden, and whom, when he regained his freedom, he made his wife. A diligent student of poetry, his passion inspired his muse, and he composed the well-known poem, "The King's Quair" (or book), in which he celebrates his mistress and expatiates upon his love. The poem, which is of considerable length and replete with allegorical allusions, is written in the heroic stanza of seven lines, in which Chaucer composed so largely, and may be regarded as a thoroughly English composition. For imagination, feeling, simplicity, and polish, it may be ranked next to the poems of his great model, Chaucer. "As an amatory poem," writes Washington Irving in "The Sketch Book," "it is edifying, in these days of coarser thinking, to notice the nature, refinement, and exquisite delicacy which pervades it, banishing every gross thought or immodest expression, and presenting female loveliness clothed in all its chivalrous attributes of almost supernatural purity and grace." To James are also ascribed "Falkland on the Grene," a "Song on Absence," and some minor pieces. Others, as "Peblis to the Play," "Christis Kirk on the Grene," though attributed by some to him, are probably the compositions of James V. Two other Scotch poets deserve a passing notice. ROBERT HENRYSON, a schoolmaster of Dunfermline, whose writings afford an excellent specimen of Scottish language and versification, is best remembered for his beautiful pastoral poem of "Robene and Makyne." He wrote also "The Testament of Fair Creseide," a continuation of Chaucer's "Troilus and Creseide," and the fable of "The Vpoulands Mouse and the Burgess Mouse." Both these poems are in the seven-lined heroic stanza, whose structure seems to have attracted all the followers of its great inventor. With another remarkable Scot we shall close the survey of the poetry of the fifteenth century. A wandering minstrel, blind from his birth, and known as Henry the Minstrel, or BLIND HARRY, composed a

long poem, "The Actes and Deides of the Illuster and Vailzeand Campioun, Schir William Wallace, Knicht of Ellerslie." It is in heroic distichs, and was highly popular in his time. Its merit has been much exaggerated, but it has no small vigour and a good deal of descriptive power, though the verse is rude and inharmonious.

Before passing from poetry, it is noteworthy that in this age we have the first mention of the title of poet-laureate. The office, indeed, under the name of the king's versifier, existed at least from the thirteenth century. John Key, in the reign of Edward IV, is the first person who is recorded under the designation of laureate. Warton is of opinion that the king's laureate was originally nothing more than "a graduated rhetorician employed in the service of the king," and that the laureate composed in Latin till the Reformation began to diminish the veneration for that tongue, from which period the native language was adopted.

A few words must be said of the prose writers of this century, though they are neither numerous nor important, nor is the prose at all comparable, in literary skill or philological interest, to the contemporary poetry. The chroniclers and writers on science, whatever they may have contributed to our knowledge, did little, if anything, for our literature. BISHOP REYNOLD, or REGINALD, PECKOCK, wrote many theological works, chiefly against the Lollards, and though the criticism of Hallam, who says that his language is more obsolete than that of Lydgate or any of his contemporaries, is scarcely justified, yet his grammar, both in accident and syntax, is not much beyond that of Wycliffe, though he is considerably in advance in vocabulary and logical structure. Nor must Caxton be forgotten, as one who contributed to the improvement of the language. SIR JOHN FORTESCUE was perhaps the best English prose writer of his day, and when modernized in orthography, his prose is very harmonious and lucid.

Though the fifteenth century is not prolific in great writers, it may be viewed as the seed-time that was yet to produce a

noble harvest. It is memorable as that in which universities and colleges were established and endowed, so that men were enabled, in the enjoyment of learned leisure, to take advantage of the revival of learning throughout the world, and thus we find them; in the latter part of this century, "making provision for the preservation and transmission to other times of the long-lost wisdom and eloquence that had been found again in their own, in building cisterns and conduits for the precious waters, that, after having been hidden for a thousand years, had burst their founts and were once more flowing over the the earth." Happily a mighty agent had come to their aid in the invention of printing WILLIAM CAXTON is a name ever to be honoured in the annals of English literature From his press issued numerous works, and it is a fact favourable to the progress of native literature that they were nearly all in English, many being translations from the French by himself Addressed to the great body of the reading people, they nurtured a taste for letters and produced new vernacular writers.

We enter upon a century which was destined to exercise a great influence both on learning and literature in England The seeds had quickened in its earlier years, which, ere its close, were to bring forth a luxuriant and golden harvest. And yet at first the spread of general learning tended to retard the progress of native literature, even as the growth of some adventitious plants checks the tenderer blades of those that are natural to the soil. The influx of learned foreigners into England, and the studies pursued at our universities, gave a powerful impulse to the cultivation of the Greek and Latin tongues, and by consequence led to a partial neglect of English Later on in the century, too, the suppression of the monasteries caused a visible decline in national learning. Not only were the youth of the country thus deprived of seminaries of learning, but many of the works of Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, and early English authors, treasured there, perished for ever. But the time came gradually when the vernacular

was to re-assert its right over the mind of the nation. The grammar schools replaced the monasteries, and the Reformation, by stirring the intellect with new thoughts and impulses, and evoking a spirit of free discussion, tended ultimately to the production of great works in our own tongue, especially in the department of prose.

To resume our survey We pass over the names of many obscure versifiers, from whom HENRY BRADSHAW must be excepted, whose life of St. Werburgh has won commendation from Warton, and come to one who, in the opinion of competent authority, is the only English writer deserving the name of a poet in the reign of Henry VII, STEPHEN HAWES. And yet it seems to us that his claim to anything like poetical distinction is far from unquestionable It does not speak highly for his judgment or his taste that he adopted no more advanced style than that of Lydgate Though a man of erudition, his verse is by no means polished, or his style lucid, while it is disfigured by the introduction of pedantic Latinisms. His writings are almost forgotten, but they have some philological interest as showing the rapidity with which French and Latin words were finding a place in our literature Yet the "Passetyme of Pleasure" was highly popular in the author's own time, and Warton pronounces it to be "almost the only effort of imagination and invention which had appeared in our poetry since Chaucer" Not less various are the estimates which criticism has made of the writings of JOHN SKELTON Educated both at Oxford and Cambridge, in holy orders, and tutor to Henry VIII. when duke of Yoik, he attained to the honour of the laureate in that king's reign. To deny that he had poetical ability is unjust, indeed, with all its defects and vices, the poetry of Skelton is full of life and vigour, though coarse, scurrilous, and ribald on many occasions, which gained for him from Pope the epithet of "beastly Skelton" There is much truth in the remark of Isaac D'Israeli, that "this singular writer had the mischance of being too original for some of his critics. they looked

on the surface, and did not always suspect the depths they glided over." His great mastery of language, his strong common sense, his trenchant satire, and caustic humour, redeem compositions that would be otherwise wholly censurable. Two of his compositions deserve especial mention, "Why come ye not to Court," a bitter, vigorous, dashing satire, in which he attacks Wolsey with the rush and fury of a wild beast; and his poem, "Phyllip Sparrow" (an elegy on Lady Jane Scroop's pet bird that was killed by a cat), which Coleridge designates "an exquisite and original poem"

Two more English poets remain to be noticed in the reign of Henry VIII. The names of SIR THOMAS WYATT, and HENRY HOWARD, earl of SURREY, are ever associated in our literature, and their works were originally published together. Both ornaments of the court in which they moved, both men of travel and accomplishments, they were attached friends, and laboured alike in refining their language and polishing our native poetry; and the writings of each have exercised considerable influence on our literature. Wyatt was born in 1503, and, after graduating at Cambridge, travelled on the Continent, and was introduced into the king's household, where his wit, courage, and handsome person attracted universal notice. In the portrait of him by his friend Surrey every noble quality is included. The greater part of his poems were probably written while he was yet a very young man, but his claims as a poet have never been adequately recognized. Surrey, being the better poet, carried off almost all the honour, though Wyatt had more force and depth of sentiment. With considerable difference in thought and diction, there was much which they possessed in common. They modelled their poetry upon the same originals, they cultivated the same class of subjects, and were among the first to treat the passion of love in a refined and courtly spirit. Surrey was about fourteen years younger than Wyatt; he had served with distinction in the wars on the Continent, and attained the rank of field-marshal. Indeed, so popular was he

for his valour, skill, and accomplishments, that he fell a victim to the jealousy of the king and his brother, was convicted of high treason on the most absurd pretences, and beheaded in 1547. Surrey was deeply imbued with the love of Italian poetry, and we find it largely influencing both his manner of thought and style. Indeed, it may be in no small degree the explanation of those sonnets and songs in which he commemorates his passion for the fair Geraldine, daughter of the earl of Kildare, reminding us of the interminable verses of Petrarch in praise of Laura. Waiton considers that for justness of thought, correctness of style, and purity of expression, Surrey may justly be pronounced the first classical poet. Some of his compositions are very charming, though they are to our thinking occasionally disfigured by inversions, which though Dr. Nott praises as giving dignity to his style, undoubtedly make him both affected and obscure. To Surrey is due the honour of having been the first to introduce into the language the unrhymed heroic stanzas.

Nor must we omit the contributions of the Scottish muse. Three writers deserve especial notice in this department. GAWIN DOUGLAS, bishop of Dunkeld, the son of the earl of Angus, had all the advantages which his high birth could procure in the best education at home and in the university of Paris, and was distinguished as an accomplished scholar, and for his moderation and peaceableness in the tumultuous events of his times. The two works by which he is best known are "The Palace of Honour," an allegorical poem, and his translation of the *Æneid* of Virgil, the first metrical version of any ancient classic that had yet appeared in the dialect of either kingdom. While, in a great degree, he followed in style and versification the great masters of the English school, Douglas endeavoured to adhere to the peculiarities of his native tongue. "He is," as Professor Craik observes, "if not the founder, at least the chief representative of a style of poetry which was attempted to be formed in Scotland. To WILLIAM DUNBAR a higher place is to be assigned.

Of this poet the unanimous voice of all competent judges is loud in commendation. Till the beginning of the last century his poems lay in oblivion, but thirty of them have been published by the Bannatyne club. Of these the most important are "The Thistle and the Rose," "The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins," and "The Golden Terge." Like Chaucer, his genius was large and manifold, alike pathetic, humorous, and imaginative. In allegory he approached the nearest to Langland, in the didactic and moral, to Gower. Both Scott and Ellis pronounced him the greatest poet that Scotland has produced—praise which can be only qualified by the recollection of Burns, whom indeed he surpasses in vigour and imagination. The last of this series, SIR DAVID LINDSAY, Lord Lyon king-at-arms under James V, was an accomplished scholar, whose memory lives in the verses of "Marmion." He assailed the abuses of the church in verses which, though often far from delicate, were pointed with satirical humour. "Though inferior to Dunbar," says Hallam, "in richness of imagination and elegance of language, he shows a more reflecting and philosophical mind."

Though many of the English writers of this age cultivated with enthusiasm the Greek and Latin tongues, and composed largely in the latter language, there were some distinguished writers in the mother tongue, and the discussions consequent on the Reformation brought forth much theological literature. The facilities, too, afforded by printing encouraged more writing on popular subjects, and the higher state of scholarship to which we have alluded tended to the gradual improvement of the language, by the enlargement of its vocabulary, and its increased capacity of expression, carrying it forward imperceptibly towards that higher development which it attained in the following century. First in the list of these prose writers, on every account, must be placed SIR THOMAS MORE. Born in 1480, the son of a judge, his natural genius and ability were highly developed by the aids of the best education. A studious, earnest, and

pious man, he pursued the profession of the law with a conscientious diligence that raised him ultimately to the councils of his king, who placed the great seal in his hands, and at last gave him over to the axe of the executioner, a martyr to truth and principle. More was one of the most profound scholars of his day. His numerous compositions in Latin are of course not within the scope of our task, but they are highly and deservedly commended. His prose writings in English, which were all collected and published in 1557, were justly considered models of pure and excellent style. Some of his letters are charming compositions; but the work upon which his fame as an English prose writer is based is "The Historie of the Pittifull Life and unfortunate Death of King Edward and the Duke of York, his brother, with the troublesome and tyrannical Government of the Usurpation of Richard III. and his Miserable End." Hallam styles it "the first example of good English language, pure and perspicuous, well chosen, without vulgarism or pedantry." And Sir James Mackintosh considers him in his words "more English than the great writers of a century after him." Every English scholar is familiar with the high estimate which Dr Johnson formed of him, and the large space he has devoted to him in his history of our language. It is worthy of notice that Sir Thomas in his early life indulged much in poetical compositions, but they seem to have been the relaxation, rather than part of the business, of his life. Some of them have sufficient merit to make it not improbable that, had he pursued poetry as a study, he would have attained to no mean rank amongst the poets of his day.

Next to More in importance, both in philological interest and for the influence it exercised on the tone of our literature, is the "Translation of the Chronicles of Froissart," by JOHN BOURCHIER, Lord Berners. As a good English composition it has great merit; and it may be regarded as the first important historical work in English on the subject of our modern history, while its popularity and interest induced a taste for the study

and composition of history, which resulted in other works of that class.

We now come to the theological writers of the Reformation—WILLIAM TYNDALE, ARCHBISHOP THOMAS CRANMER, and HUGH LATIMER. The excellent translation of the New Testament and part of the Old by the first of these, is a very remarkable work in the history of our literature. In its style it is vigorous, eloquent, and terse, and it left its mark on English philology. The writings of Cranmer are numerous. As a theological writer he was one of the great lights of the Reformation; but he was not eminent for style or composition, beyond being an easy and perspicuous writer. Bishop Latimer's sermons are very remarkable compositions. Not only admirable for their piety and boldness, waging uncompromising war against the sins and heresies of his day, they are also valuable in a literary point of view, as giving us perhaps the best specimens of the living speech of educated men of the period that are extant, as well as of that style of popular preaching by which the minds of men were aroused by the great reformers. Simple, homely, and vigorous, lively, caustic, and occasionally farcically humorous, fervid, earnest, and often eloquent, they retain to this day much of the charm and interest by which they at first captivated the hearers.

Nor may we close this list without a reference to two distinguished laymen, fellows of the same university, and both devoted to the cause of the Reformation. The first was the celebrated SIR JOHN CHEKE, the first professor of Greek in the university of Cambridge. The age had no more learned man in England, none who did more for classical literature, while our own is largely his debtor, not for the extent of his writings in the vernacular, but for their value in style and diction. His compositions were chiefly translations from the Greek and the English into the Latin; but he left besides, "The Hurt of Sedition" and some letters, "The New Testament in English after the Greek," which may justly bear comparison with any contemporary work in the language. "He is," says Mr.

Maish, "perhaps the first Englishman in whose prose style the influence of a familiarity with classical literature is fully and clearly manifested." This is shown by his grammatical accuracy in syntax and inflections, by the scrupulous use of words and idioms. It is observable that, though strongly imbued with the spirit of the Greek and Latin, his vocabulary is almost purely Anglo-Saxon. ROGER ASCHAM has been styled "the Father of English;" and, indeed, our obligations to him as a reformer of the language cannot be well over-estimated, for there are few greater names in the history of our prose literature. He applied himself diligently to promote amongst his countrymen the practice of writing in their native tongue, instead of the more fashionable one of Latin. For this purpose he composed his celebrated work "Toxophilus, or the School of Shootinge," which he prefaces with the observation, that "he that will write well in any tongue must follow this counsel of Aristotle, to speak as the common people do; to think as wise men do; as so should every man understand him, and the judgment of wise men allow him." This was followed by "The Schole Master." Both these works are remarkable for the purity of their style, and the rejection of those foreign words and idioms which were then so fashionable. His entire works were first published by Dr. Giles in 1865. The example thus set by these two men was followed by others, such as Thomas Wilson and Webster Puttenham.

CHAPTER III

WE now enter upon an era in our literature which is known as the Elizabethan, for in the reign of that sovereign it had its youth, bright and beautiful and vigorous, though it was cradled in an earlier, as it had its maturity in a later epoch. In England an age of excitement, intellectual and political, was succeeded by one in which the spirit of enlightened freedom and material advancement of the nation, brought a

feeling of security which gave men time to think deeply and tranquilly, and to speak their thoughts and utter their fancies without fear or restraint. "Our writers," says Hazlitt, speaking of this period, "had something in them that savoured of the soil from which they grew—they were truly English. They did not look out of themselves to see what they should be—they sought for truth and nature, and found it in themselves, a bold, vigorous, and independent race of thinkers, with prodigious strength and energy." In the van of that literature comes SIR THOMAS SACKVILLE, afterwards earl of Dorset, the only author whose name is known of those who contributed to "The Mirrour for Magistrates." To this book he contributed the two best pieces, "The Prologue," or Introduction, and "The Complaint of Henry duke of Buckingham." The former of these is a very remarkable poem. In structure it is modelled on the favourite seven-lined decasyllabic rhymed stanza of Chaucer, while there is much that is Dantesque in its plot; and it is filled with allegorical personages and strikingly fine imagery, that remind us at once of the earlier masters of that mode of thought, and that greatest of all who was to succeed him, Edmund Spenser. We shall be pardoned for a brief outline of this poem. A fine picture of winter, both in its material and moral aspects, introduces the poet to Sorrow, as the night is darkening down. Here he meets Remorse, Dread, Revenge, Misery, and many others, in whom the passions and acts of humanity are personified—all drawn with wonderful truth and vigour. Then the poet passes with his conductor over the gloomy lake of Acheron, and beholds those wretched dead who had occupied high places in the world. Nor is the harmony of the verse unworthy of the greatness of the theme, and one to-day can peruse these fine stanzas with much of the same feelings of delight and admiration that he derives from those of Spenser. The "Complaint" is in the same measure, and has some excellent passages. Of these the description of midnight is strikingly beautiful.

"Nothing," says an able critic, "is wanting to Sackville that belongs to force, either of conception or expression. In his own world of the sombre and sad, also, he is almost as great an inventor as he is a colourist."

In our progress we are now at a new phase of our literature—that of the Drama. To the more peaceful days of the golden age of Elizabeth we are indebted for the rise of the regular drama—a natural result of that tranquillity and prosperity when men's minds, relieved from anxiety, sought for relaxation and amusement. Mysteries, Miracle-plays, and Moralities, had each done their parts in the religious education and the entertainment of the people, and the two last had not yet disappeared. Theatrical representations passed from the monasteries to the universities, the schools, and even the courts of law, and masques and pageants of a dramatic and allegorical character were common in the days of which we speak. From these sprang the Interludes, which may be considered the earliest form of our dramatic compositions. They were dramatic in this, that the scriptural and the allegorical personifications gave place to the characters of real life, but beyond that they had little else dramatic—little of plot, little of constructive arrangement, and but one scene. It needed the spirit of the old dramatic compositions of Greece and Rome, with which our writers were then becoming familiar, to infuse life and form and power into these scenic efforts, and produce the regular drama. Of these Interludes, the first of which we have any record in our literature are those of JOHN HEYWOOD, who is considered their inventor. The first comedy, properly so called, is "Ralph Roister Doister," the production of NICHOLAS UDAL, master of Eton, and afterwards of Westminster school. It is avowedly written on the model of Plautus and Terence, is divided into acts and scenes, has a numerous *dramatis personæ*, and a plot which is gradually developed to its end. Rude in its versification—for it is all in verse—it is not devoid of raciness and humour, though the latter savours more of buffoonery than wit. Another comedy of the same character, and written about the

same time, is "The right pithy, pleasant, and merrie Comedie, Gammer Gurton's Needle," also in rhyme. A third example, that of "Misogonus," attributed to THOMAS RYCHARDES, is remarkable for the exhibition of the fool or jester, who in the days of Shakspeare was destined to be so attractive. "There are few pieces in the whole range of our ancient drama," says Mr. Collier in his criticism of this play, "which display the important character of the domestic fool in anything like so full and clear a light."

The rise of the English tragedy dates from about the same period. In the year 1562 our stage exhibited the first piece that can be claimed by the regular drama. The accomplished THOMAS SACKVILLE, of whom we have already spoken as a poet, in conjunction with THOMAS NORTON, composed the tragedy of "Gorboduc," or "Ferrex and Porrex," which was shown before the queen's most excellent Majesty, and played by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple at Whitehall. "As a work of genius," says Hazlitt, "it may be set down as nothing; as a work of art, it may be considered as a monument of the taste and skill of its authors." It has little of the dramatic save in form and structure; it is destitute of passion and dramatic feeling. It is remarkable, however, in for the first time introducing into the drama the use of blank heroic verse. From this period, as Mr. Collier informs us, the field "seems to have been pretty equally divided between the later morals and the earlier attempts in tragedy, comedy, and history."

Most of these dramas have, however, perished, and are now known only by name, nor is their loss, we imagine, much to be lamented. We pass on, without anything noteworthy, to that time when, in the words of Professor Craik, "a crowd of dramatists arose whose writings still form a portion of our living poetry, and present the regular drama no longer only painfully struggling into the outward shape proper to that species of composition, but having the breath of life breathed into it, and beginning to throb and stir with the pulsations of genu-

ine passion." Of these precursors of the advent of him who was soon to raise the drama to its highest elevation, GEORGE PEELE first claims notice. Mr. Dyce has given a collected edition of his plays and poems. His best drama is "David and Bethsabo," which has been much praised. Peele was highly lauded both as a poet and playwright by his contemporaries, and by Gifford and Campbell amongst modern critics—praise to which Mr. Hallam does not consider him entitled. To Mr. Dyce we are also indebted for collecting the works of ROBERT GREENE, a dissipated wit, dramatist, and miscellaneous writer, alike remarkable for his good advice and his bad example. His merits have been variously estimated. Though licentious and indecent, his writings exhibit great vivacity, humour, and satirical power. With Greene may be associated his fellow-labourer, THOMAS LODGE, who published a number of dramatic pieces, novels, and songs. Hallam pronounces him one of the best poets of the age, and his pastoral songs are very pretty, simple, and graceful. From his novel of "Rosalynd" Shakspeare is said to have taken the plot of "As You Like It." CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE takes a higher place than these. He was a man of great genius, and comes nearer to Shakspeare than any of his contemporaries. Of his dramas, which have been all edited by Mr. Dyce, four deserve special mention—"Tamburlaine," which, despite of its stilted phraseology, has much dramatic power and considerable spirit and poetry; "Edward II.," which Hazlitt and Lamb commend highly, and Hallam pronounces the best historical play after those of Shakspeare; "The Tragical History of the life and death of Doctor John Faustus," which, though an imperfect and unequal performance, is perhaps on the whole his greatest work, and "The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta," the first two acts of which, Hallam says, are more vigorously conceived, both as to character and circumstance, than any other Elizabethan play except those of Shakspeare. Indeed, it is not improbable that the character of Barabbas may have suggested some

traits in the portraiture of Shylock. Nor must the claims of Marlowe as a poet be overlooked. Though we cannot endorse the extravagant praises of Jonson, Heywood, Drayton, and some others of his contemporaries, yet his versification was smooth and flowing; and one of his charming lyrics is commemorated by Isaac Walton, "Come live with me and be my Love."

And now the progress of our narrative brings us into the presence of one who was the wonder of his own times, as he has been of all succeeding ages; whose supremacy was unquestionable, as it is unapproachable. How little is known of the WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE that lived and moved in the flesh! how much of the Shakspeare, whose vast gigantic spirit lived in the wondrous works that he has left, and who moved and moves the hearts, and stirs the passions of the great mass of human kind. It may be that this is all the better. It is a fond thought, perhaps a pardonable one, to think that we can the more profoundly and reverently idealize him through the manifestations of his great intellect, the less we are diverted from the contemplation by the commonplaces of an everyday working life. On the 26th of April, 1564, John Shakspeare, a burgess of Stratford-on-Avon, with Mary his wife, brought to the baptismal font of the parish church an infant some three days old, who received the name of William. The plague that devastated this town spared the boy who was to be the glory of his country. The grammar school of the place afforded him a scant education, with the "small Latin and less Greek" which Ben Jonson ascribes to him. Doubtless, the boy's poetic spirit was stirred by the masks and plays and pageants which were common in his young days, and which we know were enacted in his native town. One can well believe that he was a charmed witness of the world-famed Coventry pageants, and the "princely pleasures" of the neighbouring Kenilworth, in 1575. And it may be that he may even then have known among the players Burbage, with whom he was afterwards to be associated, and Greene and Hemminge and

others. How he occupied himself in his youth is but conjecture; but before he reached his nineteenth year he married, and about 1586 he left Stratford for London, taking with him, it may be, the manuscript of his "Venus and Adonis," and the first sketches of some of his earlier plays. No doubt he made even then the drama his study, and we find his name, in 1589, twelfth in the list of the sixteen proprietors (of whom Burbage was one) of the Blackfriars theatre. In that year or soon after he is known as a dramatist, and thenceforward his prolific intellect poured forth its treasures of drama and poem, and his popularity and power went on continually increasing, till at last he asserted, as by kingly right, his supremacy over all others. Glimpses of his outward life we catch here and there at the Globe Theatre and the Mermaid Tavern, till at last, somewhere about 1604, he retires to his native Stratford with a competency, still to write, and occasionally going to superintend the production of new plays. And we see him too, visited in his retreat by Jonson, and Drayton, and others, who loved and honoured him, and then, on the 23rd of April, 1616, he passes away. It is the anniversary of his birth, as if his "little life" was to be perfectly "rounded," the end of the circle just touching the commencement. And yet in this "little life" of fifty-two years he accumulated a mass of treasure unequalled in worth and splendour, which he bequeathed to the world—thirty-five dramatic pieces, with their ideal characters and creations, and poems of beauty and passion and imagination unsurpassed. But of the intellectual and moral Shakspeare we know much. First, we find that imperial intellect rising above all schools, opinions, and doctrines. "In each of his plays," says Professor Masson in one of his brilliant and profound essays, "there is a central idea, a single thought round which all may be exhibited as consciously or unconsciously crystallized; but there is no pervading maxim, no point set forth to be argued or proved." Next, he possessed of all men that ever lived the attribute of many-sidedness

in the largest measure. His conceptions are infinitely diversified, his characters infinitely varied; Hamlet, Falstaff, Pistol, Jacques, Iago, Prospero, Lady Macbeth, Desdemona, kings, clowns, heroes, all portrayed to perfection, each talking and acting with consummate fitness. Shakspeare did this from the necessity of his large, catholic intelligence. "Man," says Goethe, "is only many-sided when he strives after the highest because he *must*, and descends to the lesser because he *will*." It is, however, to the sonnets of Shakspeare that we are to look for the real development of his inner life and feeling; they are "intensely, painfully autobiographic, although in a style and after a fashion of autobiography so peculiar, that we can cite only Dante in his 'Vita Nuova,' and Tennyson in his 'In Memoriam,' as having furnished precisely similar examples to it." There we see a nature profoundly meditative, even to sadness, with the mysteries of life and death stirring the very depths of his being; ever lapsing from the physical to the metaphysical—passionate, tender, and at times subdued in the presence of the littleness of humanity and the vastness of the superhuman. We shall not enter into any detailed criticism of the various compositions which Shakspeare has left us. It would open too wide a range for our limits; nor indeed would it be necessary. It will be enough for us to observe upon the vast influence of his genius upon our literature, not only in the drama, which he almost revolutionized, but also in our language, which he polished, enlarged, purified, and fixed for ever. We can as little imagine a time when the language of Shakspeare will be strange or obsolete, as we can a time when the thoughts and feelings which he has embodied in that language will be unfelt or unintelligible. The tongue of Shakspeare will ever be the tongue of English speech, the sun round which our national language will ever revolve, and be kept in its orbit by its attractive power. Goethe declared that Shakspeare "has already exhausted the whole of human nature in all its tendencies, in all its heights

and depths, and that in fact there remains for him, the after-comer, nothing more to do." If Shakspeare be the glory of England, which claims him as her child, he is the heritage of the world, which owns him as a sovereign. From 1623 to the present nearly two hundred editions of his works have appeared in English, while his commentators are without number. He has been translated into every European tongue, (including twenty-seven translations into the German), and even into Bengalee and Hindostanee. Thus he has become one of the greatest animating spirits of the world's literature, a spirit confined to no age and to no place.

One needs to pause for a moment after leaving so august a presence, before resuming the consideration of genius, however exalted. Grouping round Shakspeare as planets round a sun, other names in dramatic literature appear. Chief of these is BEN JONSON, though he belongs to an entirely different school. He, too, was an actor as well as a dramatist; and though in his eventful life he had used the trowel of the mason and the sword of the soldier, yet he got the advantage of some education in Westminster School, and St. John's College, Cambridge. He must have made good use of the scant opportunities afforded him, for he was imbued with much of the spirit of the ancient classics; and he aimed at constructing his dramas upon the models of Plautus, Terence, and Seneca, and a rigorous observance of the dramatic unities. At first he seems to have written for the stage in conjunction with others; but in 1596 his comedy of "Every Man in his Humour" appeared, which at once established his fame, and gained him a host of enemies, his literary quarrels with whom form so large a portion of his personal history. From that period he wrote about fifty dramatic pieces, of various sorts, as well as many poetical compositions; but his fame as a dramatist mainly rests on his first piece, and "Volpone," "The Silent Woman," "The Alchemist," and "The Sad Shepherdess," the latter being incomplete. Learned, judicious,

and correct as a dramatist, more elaborate than graceful, more witty than playful, his humour is not of that genial, hearty nature which, like that of Shakspeare, fills the heart with merriment and sunshine; it is strong and racy, no doubt, but it is coarse and farcical. It is, however, in his masques and court pageants that Jonson's poetical genius shines brightest. "The airy elegance of these compositions," says Craik, "is a perfect contrast to the stern and rugged strength of his other works; the lyrical parts of them especially have often a grace and sportiveness, a flow as well as a finish, the effect of which is very brilliant."

FRANCIS BEAUMONT, born in 1576, and JOHN FLETCHER, nine years the senior of the former, belong to the school of Shakspeare, and take, after Marlowe, the nearest place to him. Both men of birth and education, they never married, but, living together in the most endearing friendship, devoted their lives to the production of those dramas which are mostly their joint composition, and all of which are ranked under their joint names. Of the fifty-two dramatic pieces included in their works, Beaumont had no share in nine certainly, and there is the strongest probability for believing that nine others were the sole composition of Fletcher. Still, it is impossible in those that remain to assign specific portions to one or the other, so as to subject either writer to any criticism distinct from the other. Yet we may not inappropriately quote the quaint remark of Fuller without altogether subscribing to it. They, "like Castor and Pollux (most happy when in conjunction), raised the English to equal the Athenian and Roman theatre; Beaumont bringing the balance of judgment, Fletcher the sail of phantasy, both compounding a poet to admiration." No doubt the dramas of Shakspeare exercised a great influence on Beaumont and Fletcher, and none of the disciples of the great master displayed a more exuberant grace and fancy, more tenderness of feeling, more passionate emotion; but how distant are even these planets from the sun! In vain we look for that "heat of passion

which fuses all things into life and poetry at a touch," for the large meditative philosophy, high and deep and broad, which comprehended and illustrated every phase of thought and feeling. Wit, humour, liveliness of dramatic movement, skilful conduct of plot and action, fine thoughts finely expressed, all these mark Beaumont and Fletcher as great dramatists and true poets; but the fine gold is too often debased by alloy—gross licentiousness, haste, and carelessness, which, though tolerated in their own times, grossly offend the better taste of ours; and hence it is that these plays, which for a time were more popular than even Shakspeare's, are now never put upon the stage, where his shall reign for ever. However, "taking them all in all," says Craik, "they have left us the richest and most magnificent drama we possess, after that of Shakspeare. The poems of Beaumont, too, deserve to be mentioned as among the most beautiful, harmonious, passionate, and imaginative of his day.

PHILIP MASSINGER is fitly assigned a place after Beaumont and Fletcher, for after the death of the former he assisted the latter in the composition of many of his dramas, as he was, according to the practice so frequent in those days, associated in writing with Decker, Middleton, Rowley, and others. The learned labours of Gifford, in his admirable edition of this dramatist, have made him familiar to us. He began to write at the commencement of the seventeenth century, shortly after the accession of James I. Of the thirty-eight plays attributed to him, twenty were consumed to light the kitchen fire by the cook of Warburton. The eighteen that remain establish his title to be placed among the *stellæ majores*. Of these, two deserve to be specially noted. "The Virgin Martyr," which has much moral grandeur, but is disfigured by grossness that mars many beauties of style and thought. Indeed, Lamb did not believe that Massinger's genius was capable of producing the finest parts of this tragedy, which he is disposed to attribute to Decker. "The very improprieties," he says, "which intrude themselves

among the sweet pieties of this play, like Satan among the sons of Heaven, have a strength of contrast, a raciness, and a glow in them which are beyond Massinger." "A New Way to Pay Old Debts" still retains its hold on the stage, mainly through the masterly delineation of Sir Giles Overreach, the most successful and striking effort of Massinger's genius. Massinger truly belongs to the school of Shakspeare. His tragic powers were of a high order, and he wrought out some great master passion with vigour and skill. In comedy he does not take so high a place. Ordinarily he is defective in comic humour, but all his compositions are marked by a pure harmonious style that wonderfully approaches to the modern, and his idiom and imagery are always correct. With Massinger is generally associated JOHN FORD, and their works are sometimes published together. Of the sixteen dramatic pieces which he left (four being the joint production of himself and others), but twelve remain, the others fell into the hands of the same cook that destroyed Massinger's, and shared the same fate. Justice has rarely been done to Ford's genius, by reason of his great faults. He chose the most revolting subjects for his drama, and sounded the very depths of impurity and grossness. But with all that revolts and disgusts there is much to admire. Whether he dealt with the tragic and the terrible, or with the tender and pathetic, he had a vivid power that few possessed in a higher degree, and his verse is full of lyrical beauty.

Amongst the *stellæ minores* of the drama are the names of THOMAS DECKER, JOHN WEBSTER, JOHN MARSTON, GEORGE CHAPMAN, and SAMUEL ROWLEY. Many of these wrote in conjunction with the greater dramatists. Before we close the history of the drama in the Elizabethan era, we may introduce the name of JAMES SHIRLEY; for though later in point of time, he was, as Lamb observes, "the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common." Besides poems and gram-

matical treatises, he wrote nearly forty dramas, in some of which he was assisted by Chapman and others, which were first collected and published by Gifford. "The happiest efforts of his genius," says Dyce, "will perhaps be found in the tragic portions of these variegated dramas. They contain many a scene of elegant tenderness, of deep and quiet pathos, and express the feelings of honour, love, and friendship in their highest fervour and refinement." The suppression of dramatic entertainments by the Long Parliament was finally accomplished in 1648.

Brief as our sketch has been, it will be seen that the national mind demanded, and the national genius supplied, the romantic as distinguished from the classical drama. The former, represented by Shakspeare and his school, cared little for the unities, save unity of action; but they dealt largely with the imaginative and the historical, addressing themselves to the passions and the nationalities of their audience. The latter is best exhibited in Jonson, and afterwards in Addison. It had but few disciples, and never became popular. Modelled on the forms of the Greek and Latin drama, preserving all the unities, it was unsuited to the genius of modern times, fettered in its action, frigid, and pedantic. It took no root, and may be said to have died out for lack of a soil to sustain it, or an atmosphere to cherish it.

As one great dramatist marks the Elizabethan age, so does one great poet (apart from the drama) stand out pre-eminent. EDMUND SPENSER was born in London about 1552, and educated at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he contracted a friendship with Gabriel Harvey, at whose suggestion he came to London in 1578, and was introduced to Sir Philip Sidney, and by him to the earl of Leicester. In 1580 he became secretary to Lord Grey of Wilton, viceroy of Ireland, and with him went to that country, where he received a grant of land in the County of Cork. There he remained, with the exception of occasional visits, till the rebellion of Tyrone. He fled to England, leaving his estate to be plundered, and his

house burned. Beggared and broken down by many trials, he died, Ben Jonson says, "for lacke of bread," in a lodging-house in Westminster.

It was in the year after his arrival in London that Spenser published anonymously "The Shepheardes Calendar," at first ascribed by some of his contemporaries to Sir Philip Sidney. As a poem it created a great sensation, and was even by some of his admirers thought to mark an epoch in English poetry. No doubt it is a very remarkable production. It is a series of twelve eclogues, named after the twelve months of the year, in which personages, under the guise of shepherds, discourse of heathen divinities, Christian theology, polemics, and politics. Despite of Dryden's praise, who says that this poem is not to be matched in any modern language; despite of many poetical beauties and good descriptions, it gave but small indications of that excellence which its author afterwards attained to. Its faults are incongruity of the characters with the subjects they discuss; an adoption of a style and a diction now growing into disuse, which gave it rusticity, but not simplicity; a frigidity in its passion and an affectation in its sentiments. Indeed, Sir Philip Sidney, to whom it was dedicated, speaks of it in terms of commendation sufficiently measured, when he says there is "much poetry in the eclogues indeed worth reading, if I be not deceived;" but he justly adds, "that framing of his style to an old rustic language I dare not allow, since neither Theocritus in Greek, Virgil in Latin, nor Sannazarius in Italian did affect it." But Spenser's genius was not to be wasted on such compositions as this, nor on the laborious trifling of writing English hexameters, pentameters, and other forms of Greek and Latin verse, and substituting quantities for accents and rhymes in English versification, after the example of Sidney and Dyer and Harvey, who prescribed "a general surceasing and silence of bald rhymes." The specimens which he has left of these quantitative verses (assailed with merciless wit by Nash), show how difficult, if not impossible,

it is to root them permanently, or make them flourish vigorously, in our English soil; nor have the efforts of later poets rendered them effective or popular. In the solitudes of the romantic scenery around his Irish residence of Kilcolman, and wandering by the Mulla (as he termed the Aubeg, or little river that flowed through his demesne), his intellect threw off those trappings, even as he would have laid aside the garb of the courtier, and he gave his genius free scope of action in the composition of that wonderful poem on which he had before this been meditating. In 1590 Spenser published the first three books of "The Faerie Queene;" the second three appeared in 1596. The design of this great epic is set forth by the author in an introductory letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, which was to portray in Arthur, before he was king, "the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelve private morale vertues, as Aristotle hath devised; which if I find to be well accepted, I may be perhaps encouraged to frame the other part of politicke vertues in his person, after that he came to be king." Such was the grand and comprehensive design, the first part even of which, if ever finished,* has not come down to us, as we have only six books, and a fragment of the seventh. We can give but a brief outline of this poem. Each virtue is illustrated by a knight and his adventures, to whom a book is devoted. In the first, Holiness is represented by the "Red Crosse Knight;" in the second, Temperance, by Sir Guyon; in the third, Chastity, by the lady knight, Britomartis, a character already familiar to the readers of Ariosto in his *Bradamante*, and of Virgil in his *Camilla*. The fourth book illustrates Friendship; the fifth, Justice; the sixth, Courtesy; the fragment of the seventh illustrates Constancy. It would demand space far beyond what is at our disposal to give any lengthened or elaborate criticism of this great epic. Notwithstanding all the difficulty of sustaining the

* Mr Collier, in his recent edition of Spenser, has disposed of the conjecture, that the rest of the "Faerie Queene" was burned in the fire at Kilcolman.

allegorical throughout so long a poem, the difficulty of enlisting such entire sympathy with such characters as make us forget the fiction and feel that we have to do with real flesh and blood beings, these allegorical creations of Spenser deserve high praise as exhibitions of his imaginative power—a faculty which he possessed in an astonishing degree of richness and expansion. “The Faerie Queene” is, to use his own expression, one of the “deepest works of wit.” The personifications of Spenser are wonderful specimens of allegorical perfection. Those of Faith and Hope are tender, beautiful, and exalted; while that of Despair is powerful in its force and appallingly dark and terrible. As a poet, Spenser takes his place with Chaucer and Milton, the greatest names in our English roll—Shakespeare, of course, standing ever alone in the unapproachable altitude of his genius. Every quality of the poet is united in Spenser in larger measure than any of them is found in poets of a grade below him. Grandeur and elevation of thought; imagination almost inexhaustible in its fertility; conception of character powerful in its delineation, till it sometimes becomes almost terrible and even revolting, and, withal, tender and beautiful at times till the heart is stirred to its very depths by its pathos; a fancy rich, vivid, and picturesque, flushing with its varied colours the airy beings that it creates—all these are Spenser’s; and with them a noble diction, language scholarly and pure, in which the nervous Anglo-Saxon element is largely conspicuous, so that, as Burke well said, “He that knows Spenser has a good hold on the English tongue,” and a versification stately, majestic, and sonorous, unsurpassed in our language, moving with a continuous flow of the finest harmony. The Spenserian stanza is one of the most splendid accessions to English versification; and in the hands of Spenser, Thomson, and Byron its excellence is conspicuous. The final Alexandrine gives beauty and finish to the stanza—the roll of the great wave of musical utterance as it breaks all along the ocean shore.

Spenser has left us other poems which deserve to be mentioned. “Mother Hubbard’s Tale,” which he says in his dedication was “long sithence composed in the raw concert of my youth,” but which Craik thinks must have undergone the revision of his maturer years, representing, as he says, “the middle age of Spenser’s genius, if not of his life.” His “Apologue of the Ape and the Fox” is one of the most felicitous specimens of fable; a happy combination of felicity and strength, a satire keen and biting, not the less so that its pungency is covered by a playful wit. Church and state, court and courtiers, are dealt with in a bold, free spirit, that at times rises to solemn reproof and passionate remonstrance, as in the case of the well-known description of the miseries of a court suitor. “The Ruines of Tme,” though Dr. Aikin pronounces it “a fine idea inadequately executed,” is a very tender, graceful, and poetical composition. “The Teares of the Muses” is a passionate lamentation on the decay of learning (scarcely justified by the literature of the times), written in elegant verses of six-lined stanzas. Of his other works we may mention “Muiopotmos, or the Fate of the Butterflie,” a very agreeable fable, light and airy and beautiful as its subject; and “Colin Clout’s come home again,” as containing many personal allusions to Raleigh and other contemporaries.

Among the minor poets of this age, and they are very numerous, many possessed considerable merit. WILLIAM WARNER was as popular in his own day as he is forgotten in ours. His “Albion’s England,” in plan somewhat like the “Mirrour for Magistrates,” is a history of England from the Deluge to the reign of James I. Its length is commensurate to its subject; it is written in the language of the people in style and diction; and though there is not much of the imaginative spirit of poetry in it, there is great liveliness and spirit in its narrative, which glides on in the smooth flow of iambic eights and sixes (or in the fourteen-syllable measure as it is often printed), so well suited for popular recitation. MICHAEL DRAYTON was the author of several works, of which the

"Polyolbion" is the most important. A stranger subject, or one apparently more removed from the domains of poetry, can hardly be imagined; "a chronographical description of all the tracts, rivers, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Great Britain, with intermixture of the most remarkable stories, antiquities, wonders, &c., of the same." * It is a wonderful work, displaying not only historical, geographical, and antiquarian learning, but much true poetry. The work consists of thirty songs, written in thirty thousand Alexandrine lines. The first eighteen of these songs were enriched with annotations by the learned Selden. Besides the "Polyolbion," Drayton wrote "The Shepherd's Garland," a collection of pastoral pieces in eclogues, "The Barrone's Warres," and "England's Heroical Epistles," and some smaller poems, all of which contain passages of considerable beauty. Another of these poetical annalists is SAMUEL DANIEL, who wrote "The Civil Wars between the Two Houses of Lancaster and York," "Muso-philus," a number of sonnets, and other minor poems. Propriety rather than elevation, purity and ease of style, not without a certain thoughtful dignity, are the characteristics of his poetry. He also wrote some plays, and a prose history of England from the Conquest to the end of the reign of Edward III. The religious poetry of this era is best represented by GILES and PHINEAS FLETCHER, who may be considered as followers of Spenser and precursors of Milton. Giles, as has been well observed, may in the passages of his highest elevation be considered as a link of connection in our poetry between Spenser and Milton; while it is asserted that the latter confessed he owed his "Paradise Lost" to the "Locustæ" of Phineas. His best work, "Christ's Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth over and after Death," with all its height of allegory, is enlivened by rich

and picturesque poetry, and there are few finer religious poems in our language. The brothers were both in holy orders, both men of high poetic imagination, but both tainted with an over-fondness for allegorical representation, which even the genius of Spenser could not maintain in public favour. Of this style "The Purple Island" of Phineas is a remarkable specimen, in which allegory is forced to do duty as an anatomical demonstrator and a moral philosopher. The island is man, and all the parts of the body and the faculties of the mind are fantastically personified with a minuteness of detail, the tediousness of which is frequently relieved by "a majesty of manner, a brilliancy of colouring, a distinctness and propriety of attribute, and an air of life, that we look for in vain in modern productions." Allied to the religious poetry was that species of composition which was speculative and philosophic, intellectual more than emotional, which was inaugurated by DR JOHN DONNE, and to which Dr Johnson applied the name of Metaphysical Poetry. Deserting the fantastic love songs and lyrics of his youth as his mind became devout and serious, he took to writing such poems as "Metempsychosis, or the Progress of the Soul." Of a nature ardent and eccentric, he possessed great depth of feeling, and an exaltation of thought that often betrayed him into extravagance of expression; but many fine passages may be found that vindicate his claim to be reckoned a poet. SIR JOHN DAVIES's fine poem on the immortality of the soul, "Nosce Teipsum," may be referred to this school, which had but a short-lived existence, that closed with Cowley.

The literary activity of this era is scarcely less conspicuous in the production of writers in prose than we have seen it to be of those in poetry. Let us select a few names in various departments, as representatives of the mass of writing that issued from the press. SIR PHILIP SIDNEY claims our earliest attention for many reasons. Nobly born, highly educated, of elegant tastes and mature judgment, he displayed in his short life,

* This is not the first geographical poem extant. DIONYSIUS of Sualana wrote in the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century a description of the whole earth, "*Περὶ τῆς γῆς*," in hexameter verse.

commencing in 1554 and ending gloriously after the battle of Zutphen, all those qualities of mind which, united to every accomplishment of the age, made him the noblest gentleman, the most polished courtier, and the most chivalrous soldier of his day—a hero in an age of heroes. So great, indeed, was the reverential estimation in which he was held, that his early death stirred with sorrow the heart of Europe. In his short life his fame had spread far and wide. The learned men of Europe dedicated their works to him, and Poland put him in nomination for her crown. Besides his poetical compositions, which are marked by elegance of language and ease of versification, he wrote two prose works, which in their day commanded the highest consideration—the “*Arcadia*” and “*The Defence of Poesie*.” The former of these, when it first appeared, was greatly admired, though it is now rarely read. It is a pastoral romance modelled on the Italian style, and though it is disfigured by the affectations and conceits which the Euphuistic school was then introducing, and to which Sidney, in violation of his own better taste, unfortunately lent himself, it has many passages of true feeling; and we must speak with respect of a work which charmed Shakspeare and Milton, and won from Cowper the eulogy, “*Sidney, sweet warbler of poetic prose*.”

“It is, however, on his “*Defence of Poesie*” that the reputation of Sidney is securely based. It is a work of rare merit. Composed in language elegant and correct, even though it may be considered somewhat too artificial in its structure, this essay shows how admirably suited our language is for the expression of poetic sentiment in its variety, strength, and grace. “It will always maintain,” observes a recent writer, “a high place in the æsthetical literature of England. It is not only an earnest and persuasive argument, but is, in style and diction, the best secular prose yet written in England, and, indeed, the earliest specimen of real critical talent in the literature.”

History had its expositors too. Amongst them we find RICHARD HAKLUYT, the enter-

prising and industrious collector of those voyages which rendered his name famous, an invaluable treasure of nautical information which, even at this time, affixes to his name “a brilliancy of reputation which a series of ages can never efface or obscure.” WILLIAM CAMDEN, LORD BACON, THOMAS HOBBES, and the learned JOHN SELDEN, besides their contributions in other departments of literature, have wrought in the field of history. Other names we pass over, to come to that of one of the brightest ornaments of his age—the courtly, gallant, and unfortunate SIR WALTER RALEIGH. Soldier, scholar, poet, historian, diplomatist, he terminated a career full of brilliant successes and unmerited misfortunes in an imprisonment that lasted for thirteen years, and ended his life, to the disgrace of a venal council and an ungrateful king, on the scaffold, in 1618, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. It was while lingering in the prison of the Tower that Raleigh composed his famous “*History of the World*.” The work was never completed, having been brought down only to the end of the Macedonian empire. It has been so executed as to cause the world to regret he was not spared to complete so mighty a task. His English is vigorous, pure, and elegant. “There is little now,” says Mr. Hallam, “obsolete in the words of Raleigh, nor, to any great degree, in his turns of phrase. He is less pedantic than most of his contemporaries; seldom low, never affected.”

One writer must not be omitted, though it is difficult to assign his place in any classification. Perhaps he may be considered most fitly as an essayist. ROBERT BURTON, a man of great learning in various departments, of fine wit, but of a hypochondriac temperament, composed the famous “*Anatomy of Melancholy*.” It is said that he was esteemed one of the most facetious companions in Christ Church, “and no man in his time did surpass him for his ready and dexterous interlarding his common discourses with verses from poets or sentences from classical authors,” but that his melancholy so grew on him that he composed this

wonderful book in the hope of relieving himself. It is a vast storehouse of learning of every kind, illustrated with the most apt quotations from the whole range of literature, and one of the most remarkable books that has been ever written in our language.

The theological writers of this age were numerous and distinguished, and in their own department fully sustain the glory of the era. Chief among these stands RICHARD HOOKER, the author of "that adamant and imperishable work, 'The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity.'" This great monument of learning and wisdom was commenced in the Temple, but completed in the more tranquil and congenial retreat of a country rectory. It presents an elaborate, learned, and dignified account of the ministry, ritual, and ceremonies of the Church of England. Its polemical arguments have ever made it a standard authority in the church, its literary merits have charmed men of all creeds, its temper and judgment have earned for its author the title of "judicious," as inseparable from his name as that of "venerable" from Bede's. "There is no learning," said Dr. Stapleton to Clement VIII, "that this man hath not searched into, nothing too hard for his understanding." Not without justice is he pronounced the finest as well as the most philosophical writer of the period. Mr. Hallam, in his "Constitutional History of England," pays him a high tribute.

Bishop LANCELOT ANDREWES, "the peerless prelate," as Fuller calls him, "so skilled in all, that the world wanted learning to know how learned he was," was the greatest preacher of his day, and a man of the deepest piety. But his writings, with all their display of erudition and eloquence, are marred by that artificial and affected style which then began to obtain among our English pulpit rhetoricians, and for the spread of which he is more answerable than perhaps any man except Dr. Donne. This latter we have already mentioned as chief of the metaphysical school of poets. His sermons and essays were in high repute in his day, and though abounding in fantastic and eccentric passages, are full of beauty.

A new edition of these and his other compositions was brought out by Alford in 1839. Of a very different school was the learned and pious JOSEPH HALL, bishop of Exeter, whose numerous writings in prose and verse entitle him to notice in the literature of the period. Pope says he wrote "the best poetry and the truest satire in the English language;" and though this praise cannot be accepted as just, his merits are unquestionable as a poet. His prose compositions are in remarkable contrast to that which has been happily called "the artificial, quibbling, syllable-tormenting school." The pureness, plainness, and fullness of his style procured for him the title of "the English Seneca." To one of his Latin works, "*Mundus Alter et Idem*," a satirical fiction, translated by Healey, under the title of "*A Discovery of a New World*," Swift was indebted for the idea of "*Gulliver's Travels*," and Sterne has been shown to be also under obligations to him. Though the fame of Bishop JOHN JEWELL is founded pre-eminently on his great Latin work, the "*Apologia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*," yet he deserves to be remembered in a notice of English literature. He was one of the greatest lights of the Reformed Church, "the *jewel* of bishops, the worthiest divine," says Hooker, "that Christendom hath bred for some hundred of years." Jewell left many works in English, devotional and controversial, which unite learning with a glowing style and rich eloquence. No name in this period claims more our reverence as a theologian, and our admiration as one of the greatest masters of English eloquence, than the great Bishop JEREMY TAYLOR. Apart from his profound scholarship and the valuable services he rendered the church, the beauty of his compositions, the vividness of his imagination, the felicity of his illustrations, and the sublimity and purity of his chaste, harmonious, and lucid style, claim for him a prominent place in any history of our literature. No works are more delightful, few are more extensively read, than his "*Holy Living and Holy Dying*." His sermons, especially

"The Marriage Ring," are as full of the graces of composition as of sanctity, and "The Golden Grove" has all the charm of a poem. Nor must we pass over the chronicler of the "Worthies of England," DR THOMAS FULLER, one of the most popular writers of his day, whose works are full of quaint humour and genuine wit, fancy, and feeling. JOHN HALES and WILLIAM CHILLINGWORTH, too, are to be remembered, and the great Archbishop JAMES USHER, "that prodigy of learning and industry," though belonging rather to special than to general literature, as well as the learned author of the "Essays on Vulgar Errors," the "Religio Medici," and other works, SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

The consideration of theological writers leads us naturally to what may be considered the glory of this glorious age, the translations of the Holy Bible. Cranmer's Bible, or "The great Bible," appeared in 1539. In 1560 the "Geneva Bible," as it is called, was published with a dedication to Elizabeth. To the learned and pious MATTHEW PARKER, archbishop of Canterbury, one of the profoundest theologians of his day, is due the honour of organizing and largely contributing to the translation which was published in 1568, and called "The Bishops' Bible," or "The great English Bible." Eight prelates were amongst the writers of it, and Parker translated the four Gospels. In fine, the translation which is now our authorized version was published in 1611. It is the fruit of the conjoint labours of forty-seven men, clerical and lay, including amongst them the greatest theologians, rabbinical, oriental, and classical scholars in England. To enter into the very interesting history of the composition of this, "the best of any translation in the world," is beside our object. As a great English classic, its beauty, purity, and excellence are indisputable, and it has done more than any other work (with the exception, if it be an exception, of the works of Shakspeare) to fix the character of our language in all its main features.

That it has much more of an antique air

than belonged to the date of its composition, results from the reverential caution with which the translators approached the previous versions, and the scrupulosity which controlled them in changing the vocabulary. In this they cannot be too highly commended; and their conduct may well be a guide to those who may have to follow in the arduous task of revising their labours.*

The philosophy of this age has its grandest representative in FRANCIS BACON, the glory of his own nation, as he was the wonder and admiration of all the philosophic minds of Europe. The biography of Lord Bacon is too familiar to need any details here. The vastness of his intellect, the range of his speculations, the grasp of his philosophic mind, all that was great and noble in him, somewhat that was weak and frail—they have all been chronicled, and much has been, with a natural tenderness, sought to be extenuated. But the great and the grand remain, and the mean and the little have passed away. We suffer nothing from the last, while we enjoy to-day, as every age that followed him did, and every age that shall follow us will enjoy, the benefactions of his genius, the light of his philosophy, to guide in the onward progress of discovery.

The essays of Bacon "On the Advancement of Learning," "The Wisdom of the Ancients," "De Augmentis Scientiarum," the "Instauratio Magna," and the world renowned "Novum Organum," belong to philosophy. His "Elements of the Laws of England," and other legal treatises, belong to jurisprudence, but the historian of our nation's literature should not pass without notice those essays and other compositions in English, to be unacquainted with which Hallam justly says "would be derogatory to a man of the slightest claim to polite letters." Burke preferred them to the rest of his writings; Dr. Johnson expatiated on their excellence and value. "Without the elegance of Addison or

* Some admirable suggestions on this subject will be found in a tract by Dr Trench, Archbishop of Dublin, "On the Authorised Version of the New Testament in connection with some recent proposals for its revision," 1858

the charming egotism of Montaigne," observes another critic, "they have acquired the widest circulation, and if Bacon had written no more, they would have bequeathed his name undying to posterity."

In this age was first printed in England that species of literature which has in our day become the most powerful moral agent in disseminating and in forming public opinion, in controlling and directing the affairs of the world. It may not be out of place to allude briefly to the origin and progress of the English newspaper. The aristocracy in the country parts employed persons in the metropolis to keep them advised of the important passing events; the news which they gathered in the coffee houses and other places of public resort they transmitted by letter, this was succeeded by the news-pamphlet, and afterwards by a sheet published at uncertain intervals, and finally, in 1622, under the editorship of Nathaniel Butler, appeared in London the first regular newspaper, *The Weekly News*. From that period the "Press," as it is popularly termed, continued to increase till it attained the dimensions, power, and position which it now enjoys.

Nor was there any lack of that form of literature less weighty than the treatise or essay, which was the happiest vehicle of wit and satire—the lighter troops that skirmished with the deadliest aim and most effective fire. The pamphlet had its best representative in THOMAS NASH. Endowed with the shrewdest mother wit, with an inexhaustible vein of the most caustic irony and a wonderful flow of language, Nash delighted in taking the offensive, and was in his true element when pouring out a flood of invective in words as unmeasured as they were often grotesque. The whole town was made merry with his attacks on Gabriel Harvey and the other writers who sought to introduce the rules of Latin prosody into English poetry. Indeed, the controversy between these two became so outrageously virulent, that an order was issued in 1599 for the suppression of the pamphlets of both. In him, too, the Puritans found their most formidable enemy,

and he kept up against the Martin Marprelates an incessant fire of biting satire, lively raillery, and gay humour that at the same time wounded and crushed them, while it made them the laughing-stock of the town. Thus he made, in the words of Isaak Walton, "such a discovery of their absurdities as (which is strange) put a greater stop to their malicious pamphlets than a much wiser man had been able."

The notice of Elizabethan literature would be incomplete without a word on that extraordinary affectation prevalent in courtly circles which took its name from "Euphues," the hero of a tale by JOHN LILLY, in two parts, "Euphues, the Anatomie of Wit," and "Euphues and his England." He who reads with delight the representative of this school in Scott's portraiture of Sir Piercie Shafton, will form an exaggerated notion of Euphuism. This "pure and reformed English," as its promoters called it, had faults enough to answer for—tricks of composition that were mere verbal trifling, antitheses and alliterations that were wearying, fantastic phrases and extravagant sentiment; yet withal it did not want wit and fancy, with a studied rhythmical flow and elegance of diction, that remained a valuable acquisition to the language when the faults and follies of Euphuism were abandoned and forgotten.

CHAPTER IV

THE epoch of our literature which we have been considering under the name of Elizabethan, may be conveniently treated as ending with the reign of James I. Yet was there no sudden decadence of genius, no darkness after the sun of Shakspeare had set, and when the light of Spenser was below the horizon. If the sun had set, it was in a glorious blaze of many-coloured light, and in the twilight was seen many a bright star, till the daylight came again with Milton. Let us take, as the next reach of the stream of our literature, the period between the accession of Charles I.

and the Revolution. Two influences were then at work which affected our literature—that of the French and Italian schools, which modified our lyrical and, even to some extent, our didactic poetry; and that of the religious spirit which, as we have seen, began to assail the drama, and produced its fruits mainly upon the prose of the times, and also in some departments of poetry. Intercourse with France, and familiarity with her writings, may be traced to the commencement of the seventeenth century; for it will be remembered that the Scottish Queen Mary, the mother of James I, was of French descent through her mother, and was herself married to a king of France, while Henrietta, the queen of Charles I, was a daughter of France, whose courtiers were to be found around the English throne. The Stuarts, with all their faults, were a chivalrous and polished race, and wits and poets mingled among the courtiers, and their minds and writings were tinctured with the poetry of France. Harmony of rhythm, elegance of diction, and felicitous conceits, were now sedulously cultivated, and some of the lyrical poetry of this period was very charming.

THOMAS CAREW, an accomplished courtier and a man of fine genius, divided his time between attendance on his royal master, Charles I, as one of the gentlemen of his privy chamber, and the composition of many beautiful lyrical poems, full of grace, elegance, and smoothness. His subjects, however, were too trifling, and his reach of mind neither sufficiently high nor broad, to raise him into the foremost place of the poets of his school. Colonel RICHARD LOVELACE, the gayest cavalier, the sprightliest wit, the handsomest man that graced the halls of Charles, wrote with the sparkle of true genius, but with the carelessness of a soldier. Yet through his pieces, chiefly amatory, we ever see a manliness and chivalrous sentiment that consorts with unaffected tenderness and at times exquisite pathos. Every reader remembers his fine poem, "To Althea from Prison," which in its way has never been surpassed. Another cavalier poet,

SIR JOHN SUCKLING, has left, beside much elegant prose, poems of great finish and elegance. Hallam pronounces his "Epithalamium" "a matchless piece of liveliness and facility," and his "Ballad on a Wedding" "is indeed," says Hazlitt, "unrivalled in that class of composition for the voluptuous delicacy of the sentiments and the luxuriant richness of the images." The name of JOHN CLEVELAND deserves to be mentioned as a royalist poet whose writings were greatly admired by his contemporaries, and whose satire was sharp and bitter, though his amatory lyrics are too full of extravagant conceits. SIR JOHN DENHAM wrote a tragedy which made him suddenly famous, but is now forgotten, while his poem of "Cooper's Hill" still keeps him in estimation as a poet. Dryden accords him the praise of majesty of style, Pope eulogizes him in his "Windsor Forest," and Dr. Johnson ranks him amongst those who improved our versification. The lyrical poetry of ROBERT HERRICK is full of charms. Eccentric, irregular, and unequal in merit, from the lightest epigrams to the most elegant songs, from the licentiousness of a Secundus and the gaiety of an Anacreon to those "noble numbers" in which he sings the birth of Christ and his sufferings on the cross, he alternately delights and offends, and exhibits in his poetry a counterpart to his life. A loyalist clergyman, who was a boon companion of the wits of the court and the gay life of the cavaliers, and when ejected from his living by the Puritans, throwing off the cassock, dubbing himself esquire, and giving himself up to the delights of song and wine. Yet, reserved finally for better things, when restored by Charles II. to his beloved vicarage of Dean Prior, he wrote higher strains than those "unbaptized rhymes," which he repents so pathetically, and for which he implores God's forgiveness.

Of all these poets the most celebrated was EDMUND WALLER, who more properly belongs to the poets of the Restoration. Of an ancient lineage and carefully educated, the wealth and influence of his family returned him to Parliament at the age of sixteen, and

he became a courtier, a wit, and a poet in his nonage. In after years he distinguished himself as a great parliamentary speaker, and was one of the most active politicians in these troublous times. To Waller eminently belongs the merit of having given to our poetry a finish in style and a smoothness of versification, surpassing everything heretofore achieved in the verse of those poets just mentioned, a merit which Dryden and Pope have accorded to him. His language is pure and elegant, and neither a vicious sentiment nor a licentious image ever stains that purity. Without the passion or elevation to raise him to the rank of a great poet, he possessed a perfect mastery of the language in which he composed, and what his amatory poems want in warmth is compensated for by the charms of sweetness and fancy. At times, too, in his graver compositions, he has a force and dignity that raise him beyond his ordinary level. His "Panegyric to my Lord Protector" is one of his finest compositions, and is greatly commended by Johnson for the grandeur, grace, and music of the lines. Waller's songs are masterpieces of grace and melody. They have been set to music by Lawes and others, and sung by everybody, till they have made the names of Sacharissa and Amoret as familiar as Petrarch's "Laura" or Spenser's "Rosalynde." In these songs we have jewels of thought in setting of verse, wrought with the most exquisite style of workmanship, and sparkling with the most felicitous turns of expression.

ABRAHAM COWLEY deserves a place among the poets of the period, as the last of the metaphysical school inaugurated by Donne. By his own age and that which followed he was lauded to a degree which in our day savours of extravagance. Yet must his merit be great whom Milton classes with Spenser and Shakspeare as the greatest of England's poets. As a writer of prose and elegant English, both in prose and verse, our language is much indebted to him.

Religious poetry had its highest representative in GEORGE HERBERT. Of the noble family of the Pembrokes, and brother of

Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, he became a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and university orator. Taking holy orders, his life was one of the deepest piety, which is reflected in his poetry, and commemorated in the charming biography of his friend Isaak Walton. Despite of quaintness, formalism, and conceits, which are so prevalent in his poems, "The Temple" and his short religious poems will ever be read with pleasure and edification. "Herbert speaks to God," said Baxter, "like one that really believeth a God, and whose business in the world is most with God. Heart-work and heaven-work make up his book." It is no small tribute to their excellence that their music soothed the spirit of Cowper in its darkest hours.

We pass over many other names to come to that one which occupies the forefront of the eventful period during which the influences of Puritanism wrought such vast changes in England socially and politically. JOHN MILTON was the poet of that intermediate era between the age of Shakspeare and Dryden, between the inventive luxuriousness of the Elizabethan era, and the witty licentiousness that followed the Restoration, standing out austere and grand, and self-contained in his noble and self-reliant nature, amidst the scenes and things that changed around him. Born in 1608, a thoughtful boy from his early youth, he received with avidity the excellent education afforded to him. He was sent to Cambridge, where, as he tells us, "I devoted myself for the space of seven years to the literature and arts usually taught, free from all reproach, and approved by all good men." Destined for the church, his conscience revolted against what he considered the tyranny of its creeds and obligations, and he cast in his lot with the Puritan party. Before his seventeenth year he had paraphrased some of the Psalms, and in that year had given assurance of a poet, in the lines "On the Death of a Fair Infant." A course of travel in France and Italy, where he made the acquaintance of many learned men, developed his genius and filled his

mind, and he won encomiums from the Italians even for his compositions in their own tongue. But ever, while courted and honoured, amid the blandishments of society and the charms of song, the handsome young Englishman felt that his portion of life was that of labour and study, and so he wrought then and thenceforth under a stern uncompromising sense of the responsibility of one "ever in his great Taskmaster's eye," and in the determination so to work that he "might perhaps leave something so written in after times, as they should not willingly let it die." After an absence of fifteen months he returned to England in 1639. His "Comus" and "Lycidas," the "Allegro" and the "Penseroso," had already appeared, to place his name high among the native poets. Finding political affairs in a disturbed and fluctuating state, he committed them "first to God, and then to those to whom the people had committed that task," and resumed his intermitted studies, occupying himself also in teaching. In 1641 he gave the world his first polemical treatise, "Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England," which was followed the same year by his work on "Prelatical Episcopacy," and the year after by the "Apology for Smectymnus." These, with other works, including his "Tractate on Education," and "Areopagitica," placed Milton in the first rank of prose writers, political and polemical, so that in 1649 he was appointed secretary of State.

Let us pass to that which is at once the glory of England and of Milton, that noblest epic of our language, the "Paradise Lost," first published in 1667. To quote eulogies of this great work would be an endless and an idle task. Selecting the noblest theme that could occupy the mind of man, he threw into it his whole nature, moral and intellectual, working into it all the wealth of classical lore, all the grandeur of holy writ, all the excellencies of his native tongue. Severe and sublime as Dante, dramatic as the Greek tragedians, descriptive as the idyllic poets, and at times full of rich and voluptuous feeling, his poetry, to use the

felicitous illustration of Coleridge, "reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairy-land, are embossed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche." In the sublimity of the subject, and the grandeur of its treatment, one well nigh forgets the splendour and beauty of versification and verbiage; yet never, as Craik truly remarks, was there such blank verse of so rich and varied music.

Upon a day, Thomas Elwood the Quaker, Milton's friend, on returning to him the manuscript of "Paradise Lost," said, "Thou hast said much here of Paradise lost; what hast thou to say of Paradise found?" Milton made no answer, but "sat some time in a muse." The seed thus cast into his soul, and nurtured by that musing, and many a musing day and night after, germinated and bore rich fair fruit—the "Paradise Regained." Though Milton preferred the latter to the former epic, the world has not concurred in his opinion. It was given to him to write the sublimest of all epics in the first, once and for all—to do this twice is given to no man. The second, with all its more tempered radiance and calmer beauty, is to the flame and glory of the first as the moon in comparison of the sun. Yet may we assert, with Lord Macaulay, that "the superiority of the 'Paradise Lost' to the 'Paradise Regained,' is not more decided than the superiority of the 'Paradise Regained' to every poem which has since made its appearance."

Two other Puritan poets may be mentioned in connection with Milton. GEORGE WITHER, who has left a considerable amount of writing, ranging over near fifty years, from James I to Charles II. His compositions, both in prose and verse, have great merit. He wrote in a fluent, lucid style of pure unaffected English, with much grace and poetic feeling. ANDREW MARVEL, the intimate friend of Milton, with whom he was associated in the office of Latin secretary to the Protector—diplomatist, politician, and patriot. He sat in Parliament

for Hull, poor and incorruptible; and served as ambassador in Russia, Sweden, and Denmark. His satires, though coarse occasionally, were always vigorous, his songs possessed tenderness, and were not wanting in elegance, and every reader remembers his fine encomiastic lines on Milton. The prose of Marvel bears a strong resemblance to that of Milton, and deserves to be better known as belonging to the standard literature of the time.

With the foregoing we may close the list of the poets that preceded the Restoration. The interval between that event and the Revolution might perhaps be not unfitly taken as representing an epoch in our literary history. The national quiet that succeeded the re-establishment of the Stuarts brought in part a new state of things, and in part a return to the old, and not unnaturally influenced the literary genius of the nation. The wits and cavaliers came back from their exile to the court, the spirit that had repressed the drama was now in its turn repressed, the playhouses were again opened, the dramatists began again to write for them. Men such as DILLON, earl of ROSCOMMON, the author of the *Essay on Poetry*, who in the days of Charles II. "only boasts unspotted bays," SACKVILLE, earl of DORSET, and SIR CHARLES SEDLEY, were ready to inaugurate an anti-Puritan and royalist literature. Waller was quite ready to train his muse to sing the praises of Charles, as heretofore he had taught her to panegyrize the protector.

The first who presents himself in this period is one whose style is so peculiarly his own, that it has given a name to a species of poetic composition that has since had many imitators, but few successful ones. During the protectorate, when Puritanism was in the ascendant, SAMUEL BUTLER, a man of great natural powers, extensive reading, and keen wit, a thorough hater of the dominant party, was nevertheless for a time domesticated with Sir Samuel Luke, a noted Puritan, and a commander under Cromwell. And then and there Butler conceived his immortal satire against the Puritans, and

made Sir Luke, in the character of Hudibras, the hero of his poem. So when Charles II was restored to the crown, and dissolute living succeeded to severe morals, Butler came out three years after with the first part of his "*Hudibras*." Lord Dorset brought it to court, where it met with a reception without parallel. The king was enchanted, carried it about in his pocket, and quoted its witty passages, which soon passed with the royal stamp as current coin of the realm, and grew into proverbs in chocolate houses and taverns, and its inimitable ridicule crowned the triumph of the cavalier party. The following year the second part appeared, and completed the popularity of the work. Inexhaustible wit and variety of knowledge brought to the illustration of the incidents and topics, give unflagging interest to what would otherwise be tedious, and it is impossible, as Dr Johnson observed, to peruse a page without finding some association of images that was never found before. In the history of literature, too, it is remarkable for the novel manner in which the iambic tetrameter is used for the first time to give expression to burlesque poetry, accomplishing the difficult feat of making accentuation an exponent of humour.

A young Northamptonshire man, who had studied at Cambridge, had come up to London in the last year of the Republic, had written some poetical pieces, and amongst them "*Heroic Stanzas on the death of Oliver Cromwell*," immediately after his funeral. Their merit was incontestible, even when compared with the tributes of Waller and Sprat on the same occasion. With the Restoration all his hopes from the Puritan party vanished, and JOHN DRYDEN, like others, transferred his allegiance to the reigning king, and celebrated that transfer by his poem "*Astræa Redux*." A man of strong intellect, ready for every species of literature, and under the necessity of pushing his fortune, Dryden took to letters as a profession, and making the acquaintance of Sir William Davenant, the new laureate, turned his thoughts to the drama. "*The Wild*

Gallant," an indifferent prose comedy, was his first piece, and a failure. Then he tried a tragi-comedy partly in blank verse, partly in heroic rhyme, "The Rival Ladies," which had some success, and is memorable for exciting a discussion on rhymed plays, which he defended in his celebrated "Essay on Dramatic Poetry." This vicious form, so uncongenial to the English tragedy, had been introduced by the royalists on their return from France, where they had become accustomed to the tragic rhymes of Corneille and other dramatic writers of the court of Louis XIV, and the English playwrights were ready enough to cater to this false taste, and abandon the noble blank verse of Shakspeare. For a time the genius of Dryden maintained the exotic, as his popularity, increased by a succession of dramas, placed him at the head of his profession, but happily it at length gave way, shaken to its core by the witty farce of the "Rehearsal," and finally abandoned by Dryden himself, who at last saw his error. With the exception of his "Annus Mirabilis," Dryden was up to this wholly occupied with writing for the stage, and in the following year he succeeded to the laureateship on the death of Davenant. It was fortunate for Dryden and for English literature that, after he had reached the age of fifty, and had written over twenty dramas, the political and religious condition of the country led him upon a new path. Attached to the court, he took the part of the Tories, and in 1681 published his celebrated satirical poem, "Absalom and Achitophel." A more masterly satire never issued from the English press—vigorous, scathing, and full of life-like sketches. This was the first of a series of those polemical and satirical poems which occupied him during his laureateship, including "The Medal," the second part of "Absalom and Achitophel," the "Religio Laici," and "The Hind and the Panther." To Dryden's great literary industry we owe a translation of Virgil, "Alexander's Feast," the "Ode to St. Cecilia," and other poems, while his prose compositions are marked by vigour, purity, and elevation. He is a great representative

writer, because for a period of nearly twenty-two years he led the national literature of his country, filling up as it were, to use the words of David Masson, the whole interval between 1658 and 1700, thus connecting the age of Puritanism and Milton with the age of the Queen Anne wits. To the highest point of dramatic excellence Dryden never attained, but in declamatory and didactic poetry, in vehement satirical invective, in lyrical passion, in the magniloquence of words that rolled like thunder and that scathed like lightning, he had no superior, perhaps no equal; and he takes a very high place as one who, by his large contributions to our literature, has left upon it permanent effects.

The revival of the drama produced its fruits. Several of those who had written in the reign of Charles I survived through the Commonwealth, and now again resumed their congenial labour, besides were added to these new names, such as THOMAS OTWAY, who wrote numerous tragedies, a few comedies, and some miscellaneous poems. His fame rests on the tragedies of "The Orphan" and "Venice Preserved." Despite of the licentiousness and indelicacies which are to be found in these, as indeed in the other plays of Otway, they abound in passages of pathos, eloquence, and beauty. NATHANIEL LEE wrote twelve tragedies, and one tragi-comedy. With all his faults, and they were neither few nor very venial, especially extravagance and bombast, the result probably of a disordered intellect, Lee was a man of genius and dramatic ability, whose fate it has been to be too greatly praised and too greatly censured. Then there were THOMAS SHADWELL, immortalized as the MacFlecknoe of Dryden, who wrote over twenty dramas, which tended much to the demoralization of the stage, in which evil work he was evilly seconded by a knot of dissolute wits, such as SIR GEORGE ETHERGE, who drew his own character as Sir Fopling Flutter in "The Man of Mode," one of the most elegant and sprightly comedies of the age, but now, like his other plays, happily banished from the stage for their

impurity. With these may be classed LORD ROCHESTER, SIR CHARLES SEDLEY, the duke of BUCKINGHAM, and WILLIAM WYCHERLEY. One woman, too, with both wit and genius, must be added to the list of dissolute writers, APHRA BEHN, who was a fellow-labourer with Rochester and Etherege in miscellanies and songs of questionable morality, and wrote seventeen dramas and some novels, all much read at the time, but so passionate and indelicate that even the not over-fastidious Pope assailed her under the character of Astræa. With her we close the drama of this period, a true reflex of the morals of the court and society in their rebound from the restraints of the austere Puritanism of the Commonwealth, and of the influence of French sentiment and manners.

Many eminent prose writers in various departments adorn the period of which we write. EDWARD HYDE, earl of CLARENDON, jurist, politician, and statesman, has left an undying name as the historian of the eventful period in which he lived. Besides many other works, his "History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England," begun in 1641, and continued to its completion during two exiles and the intervening period when he filled the highest office in the realm, is an important contribution to the history of our nation, and of great value as the narrative of an eye-witness and actor, who was a keen discernor of character and profoundly versed in statecraft.

THOMAS HOBBS, too, contributed to history his "Behemoth, or History of the Causes of the Civil Wars of England," though his highest fame is as a philosophical and political writer; and there is no doubt that his writings, besides their intrinsic literary merit, gave an extraordinary impulse to the spirit of free inquiry throughout Europe. And with Hobbes we may not omit mention of the distinguished opponent of his metaphysical theories, DR. RALPH CUDWORTH, the author of "The True Intellectual System of the Universe," unhappily left unfinished. A man of great strength of genius and scope of learning, of subtle power of thought and

depth of reasoning, this great work is written "in a style of elastic strength and compass which places its author in a high rank among our prose classics."

JOHN RUSHWORTH, BULSTRODE WHITLOCK, SAMUEL PEPYS, and some others, occupy a subordinate place as chroniclers. ANTHONY A WOOD, dull and industrious, and ISAAK WALTON, racy and charming, represent biography; while "that most ingenious and virtuous gentleman," JOHN EVELYN, the author of the celebrated "Sylva," a ripe scholar, and a man of elegant tastes and varied knowledge, enriched our literature with essays on philosophy, politics, natural history, commerce, and religion. "No change of fashion," says Southey, "no alteration of taste, no revolutions of science, have impaired, or can impair, his celebrity."

Some names in theology deserve especial notice. ROBERT LEIGHTON, archbishop of Glasgow, a man who united the highest elevation of soul with the deepest humility and the most unaffected piety, whose works were pronounced by Doddridge to be amongst the greatest treasures of the English tongue; the learned DR. JOHN LIGHTFOOT, whose researches into Rabbinical writings have done so much to elucidate the Holy Scriptures; DR. ISAAC BARROW, more renowned still as a mathematician; JOHN TILLOTSON, archbishop of Canterbury, one of the most popular preachers of his day, whose eloquence captivated all hearers, and whose compositions were reckoned as models of style; and above all, JOHN BUNYAN, "the Tinker of Bedford," one of the most marvellous men that history records. Sprung from the lowest grade of the people, scantily educated, morally neglected, he yet produced in the solitude of his imprisonment for conscience' sake, with no books to aid him but the Bible and Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," one of the greatest works that ever came from the pen of uninspired man—"The Pilgrim's Progress." No book except the Bible has had so extensive a circulation in our language, and perhaps no book after the Bible stands higher as an instrument of

popular devotional teaching. Apart from all this "The Pilgrim's Progress" claims a place in our survey of literature as an English classic as truly as the works of Chaucer or Spenser or Milton. "It is composed," as Coleridge remarks, "in the lowest style of English, without slang or false grammar. But if you were to polish it you would destroy the reality of the vision." Its style is that of earnest, idiomatic, vernacular English. "There is no book in our literature," says Macaulay, "on which we could so readily stake the fame of the old, unpolluted English language: no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed."

It is not within the scope of our duty to notice the great names in the sciences that adorn the period—in mathematics, physics, astronomy, philosophy, metaphysics, and natural history, save so far as incidentally to illustrate the progress of general literature. All these studies received a great impetus from the institution of the Royal Society in 1645, destined thenceforth to exercise a large and beneficial influence on the science of the country, and numbering in its roll of membership in 1672 one of the most gigantic intellects that the world has produced, the immortal ISAAC NEWTON.

CHAPTER V

FROM the Revolution to the end of the reign of George I. is generally taken to mark that period of our literature which used to be called its Augustan age, that is, from 1688 to 1727. It was an age of intellectual culture and brightness, no doubt; but inferior to that which preceded it. It is observable, however, that the levity and licentiousness which so discredibly marked the days of the Stuarts were gradually displaced by a graver and a better moral tone, apparent both in the drama and in general poetry. Some of the great men of

the era which we have been recording still wrote, forming the links between the two periods.

Of these one of the greatest was JOHN LOCKE, whose "Essay on the Human Understanding" was not published till 1690. His merits as a moral philosopher, a metaphysician, and a political writer are great, and the obligations that we owe him for his "Essay" are, as Hallam remarks, "never to be forgotten." Viewed merely as a writer of English prose, his place is, however, by no means a high one. The controversy between the Honourable CHARLES BOYLE and RICHARD BENTLEY deserves a passing notice in the history of literature, as evoking a vast deal of learning, brilliant wit, and the most caustic satire from the writers who ranged themselves on the sides of the respective combatants.

Bishop GILBERT BURNET, too, though he had written much before the Revolution, yet reached his highest fame after that event, to which he had so largely conduced, and we have therefore placed him in this era. His "History of the Reformation" was not, indeed, completed till the last year of Queen Anne's reign, and the "History of his Own Times" did not appear till after his death. Burnet was an active politician, and a voluminous writer in politics, history, theology, and biography; but viewed in a purely literary point, his merits in composition and style are not beyond that of one who wrote unaffectedly and clearly, but without grace, eloquence, or wit.

The accession of Anne nearly synchronises with the commencement of the eighteenth century, the brightest period of which is usually associated with her name under the well-known designation of "The wits of Queen Anne's reign." The great representatives of the literature of the time were Swift, Addison, Steele, Pope, Shaftesbury, Gay, Arbuthnot, Atterbury, Prior, Parnell, Bolingbroke, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Rowe, Farquhar, and De Foe.

As Milton was the great poet of the Commonwealth, and Dryden of the Restoration, so was Pope of this era, which is commonly

called the literature of Queen Anne's time, though covering that of her successor.

ALEXANDER POPE was born in 1688, passed the years of childhood in Windsor Forest, and his boyhood at Twickenham. Delicate from his birth, an object of solicitude to the best of mothers, his Greek and Latin were acquired under priestly tuition, for he was a Roman Catholic, and at private schools. Even in childhood he "lisp'd in numbers." It is credibly stated that while yet a mere boy he was taken to a coffee house to see Dryden (who died before Pope was twelve years old), and that the veteran poet gave him a shilling for a translation from Ovid. When he was sixteen he attracted the attention of Wycherley and other wits by his "Pastorals," which, after being handed about in manuscript, were published. However creditable to a youth, they had little to recommend them beyond excellent language and a skill in versification equal to anything that had yet appeared in poetry. Between 1706 and 1709 he wrote the "Essay on Criticism," published in 1711; a wonderful composition for a young man of twenty, that won the praise of Addison, as it has since of many eminent critics. Some minor poems intervened between that and "The Rape of the Lock" in 1712, one of the most finished, as it is one of the most brilliant, ingenious, and airy poems in our language. In 1714 appeared the "Ode on St. Cecilia's Birth-day," and the poem on "Windsor Forest," a fine descriptive composition. "The Temple of Fame," though composed in 1715, was not published for two years after, replete with learning and acute observation; and the same year he gave, in a collection of his poems, that exquisite one, the epistle of "Eloisa to Abelard." "The Dunciad" was first published anonymously in Dublin in 1728, but every one recognized the hand that drew the portraits in that famous satire. "A monument of satirical power," says De Quincey, "the very greatest which man has produced, not excepting the MacFlecknoe of Dryden." The four epistles which compose the "Essay on Man" were commenced

in 1732 and completed in 1734. This is certainly not one of the best poems of Pope, but undoubtedly it is not what De Quincey calls it, his worst. The execution fails when compared with the vastness of the design, but yet it was not intrinsically a failure; in it, to use the words of Wilson, "precept and practice were modulated into verse, that they might write themselves in every brain and live in every tongue." We omit to notice many other works by which Pope reigned supreme in the world of letters for near forty years.

Pope is the disciple and successor of Dryden in that school which the former may be said to have founded—the artificial didactic style. Inferior to his master in robust force and crushing power, he surpassed him in polish and keenness. The satire of the one was as the mace of Cœur de Lion, that of the other as the blade of Saladin. Dryden in his versification was often rugged and careless. Pope polished every line with the utmost care, till it acquired an exquisite finish. Dryden made the heroic rhymed measure a power in our language. Pope in addition made it an exceeding beauty. His versification was perfection. The rhythmic flow of his numbers is delicious, like the beats and pulses of music or the isochronous swing of the pendulum. If in his didactic pieces we find condensed reasoning and lucid order rather than imagination, it is because he subordinates the latter to the former, not from any poverty of the imaginative faculty, with which "the Rape of the Lock" shows that he was abundantly endowed. The eminence in poetry which he attained he has retained to our own times, and all know how the admiration of Byron amounted almost to worship. His fame as a poet dwarfs his reputation as a prose writer. Of his epistolary compositions various estimates have been formed. If they are elegant, polished, and pointed, they want the charm of ease and freedom. You feel that he was writing less for his correspondent than for the public.

At a long distance from Pope is the place which the other poets of Anne's time occupy.

JOSEPH ADDISON wrote a few poems characterized by elegance and purity, and a tragedy, "Cato" MATTHEW PRIOR was a very popular poet in his own day. He is a good representative of the French school, whose modes of thought and expression then largely tintured our literature. His poems consist of tales, occasional poems, and two works of a larger and more ambitious character, "Alma" and "Solomon." Ease, sprightliness, humour, and even wit, occasionally mark the compositions of Prior, but he is not free from indelicacy, which, but for his skill, would be grossness. Hazlitt has happily remarked, "No one has exceeded him in the laughing grace with which he glances at a subject that will not bear examining, with which he gently hints at what cannot be directly insisted on, with which he half conceals and half draws aside the veil from some of the muses' nicest mysteries," and his lyrics are not undeserving of the praise which Thackeray accords them, of being "amongst the easiest, the richest, the most charmingly humorous of English lyrics." If his two larger poems want the graces of the minor compositions, they are not without merit. In "Alma" he contrives to make even metaphysics lively, and it was the only one of Prior's poems of which Pope said he should wish to be the author. "Solomon," was thought by himself and by others to be his best composition.

THOMAS PARNELL, an Irish clergyman, wrote several poems as well as some prose works. Amongst the former "The Hermit" still holds a place in literature. Smartness of diction and happiness in the selection of images, rather than largeness of comprehension or strength of genius, characterized his productions.

AMBROSE PHILIPS is now only remembered by the literary feud between him and Pope, who assailed his "Persian Tales" and "Pastorals" with all the merciless power of that jealous nature; yet his writings are not without the merit of elegance. Among the poets, too, must be mentioned JOHN GAY, whose fables were deservedly popular in his own day, and have not yet failed to please.

Two physicians cultivated the muses, Sir SAMUEL GARTH, whose "Dispensary," a satirical poem, delighted the town. It has been truly characterized by Johnson, who says, "No passages fall below mediocrity, and few rise much above it." SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE was an indefatigable composer. Besides professional works he wrote an heroic poem, "Prince Arthur," and a philosophical one called "Creation," with many minor poems. Though Dryden said he wrote his poems "to the rumbling of his chariot wheels," and Pope gave him a place in the Dunciad, Blackmore was not without claims to the name of poet, and gained the praise of Addison and Johnson.

Nor may we close this brief sketch of the poetry of the period without a word in commemoration of him who has justly been called "the father of English Hymnology," DR ISAAC WATTS. His Hymns and Spiritual Songs, and "Divine and Moral Songs for Children," will not, it is true, bear a moment's comparison with the noble compositions of Heber, Keble, and others; yet in his own day he deserved the praise of having done better than others what no man had up to that time done well.

Not many names of note appear among the dramatists of this era, in addition to such of those who, belonging to the period of the Revolution, lived into this. WILLIAM CONGREVE, born in 1670, had acquired some fame by his play of the "Old Bachelor," brought out in his twenty-first year, and pronounced by Dryden to have been the best first effort in that line which he had ever witnessed. "The Double Dealer" and many other dramatic pieces followed, including his fine tragedy of "The Mourning Bride," so unduly lauded by Johnson—all written before the accession of Anne. GEORGE FARQUHAR left among many comedies "The Beaux' Stratagem," which still holds the stage, and vindicates his title to be reckoned a man of lively wit and considerable dramatic genius. SIR JOHN VANBRUGH, the architect of Blenheim, wrote several comedies full of life and dash, though often licentious. These may be all classed as representing the French

school—light, witty, abounding in repartee, with some of the leaven of indelicacy of the times of the Stuarts still remaining, especially noticeable in the unworthy portraiture of female characters. To the honour of SIR RICHARD STEELE let it be remembered, that his comedies sought not to imitate this licentiousness but to reform it, and he was the first who introduced the virtues on the stage. In the classic school Addison's "Cato" takes the first place. Whatever may be said of its frigidity, it is a noble production, severe, dignified, and moral, as becomes the tragic muse. It abounds in fine sentiments finely expressed. There are few things better in its way than Cato's soliloquy on the immortality of the soul, which is familiar to every reader. Nothing can be more unjust than the flip-pant remark of a modern critic, that "Cato is a parson without a tie-wig—an intolerable mixture of the patriot and the pedant."

NICHOLAS ROWE wrote several tragedies. The best of these are "The Fair Penitent," for which he was mainly indebted to the "Fatal Dowry" of Massinger, and "Jane Shore," professedly written in imitation of Shakspeare. They are both effective pieces, melodious in versification, and full of pathetic situations, they kept possession of the stage till our own times, and still find readers in the closet. EDWARD YOUNG wrote several tragedies, of which "The Revenge" is the best. They are all too artificial, forced, and rhetorical, and the passion degenerates into turgescence and bombast.

Let us turn to the prose writers of the period of which we are treating. First of these, and filling the whole period from his first appearance as a political writer in 1683, till near his death in 1731, is DANIEL DE FOE. Few men wrote so much in his day; none that wrote so much wrote so well. An honest politician, he was above all parties, and spared the abuses of none; and so he suffered pillory and imprisonment; the only popular writer who approached social questions with a wise and benevolent spirit. His numerous works, amounting to more than 200, embrace politics, history, polemics, and

political economy. "The History of the Union" and the "Essay on Commerce" are the works of a well-informed man and a sound thinker. But it is not on any of these that the literary fame of De Foe rests. As a writer of fiction the author of "Robinson Crusoe" takes rank with the greatest known in our literary annals. In 1719, when he was fifty-eight years old, De Foe struck out this new line in which he was to excel. Robinson Crusoe first appeared in a periodical publication entitled *The Original London Post, or Heathcot's Intelligencer*, occupying from Nos. 125 to 189—the first instance of *feuilleton* writing we believe in England. Few works have ever been more popular. Its fascination is mainly due to the quality which De Foe possessed in a supereminent degree, the power of giving to fiction all the air of truth and reality, but in plain and unexaggerated narrative. From this date till 1728 he produced nine novels, four of them marked with his peculiar power of incident and romance, and some miscellaneous works, amongst which his "Journal of the Plague in London" is one of the most powerful and pathetic.

But of the prose writers the greatest name is that of JONATHAN SWIFT, the immortal author of "Gulliver's Travels," "The Drapier's Letters," and the "Tale of a Tub." Descended from an English family, born and educated in Ireland, and for a time the secretary of Sir William Temple, he entered the Church and obtained preferment in Ireland. His first political tract, "A Discourse on the Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and Commons at Athens and Rome," at once placed him among the supporters of the Whigs. "The Battle of the Books" and "The Tale of a Tub" (though like the tract published anonymously in 1704, were known to be Swift's), proved him to be one of the most vigorous satirists and greatest writers of his age, and he now was in the most intimate familiarity with Addison, Steele, and the other wits of the Whig party. Thenceforth Swift was a power in the nation. In polemics and in politics his pen was in constant employment,

while he amused himself in *jeux d'esprit* under the pseudonym of Isaac Bickerstaff, and wrote a great deal of verse. Amongst the most celebrated of his works are "Conduct of the Allies" (1712), "Public Spirit of the Whigs" (1714), "Drapier's Letters" (1724), and "Gulliver's Travels" (1727). The death of Stella in 1728 came as a heavy blow to a frame assailed by many maladies, and a mind in which latent phrensy had begun to develop itself. Yet between that and 1736 his genius emitted many a brilliant spark in satire and lampoon, and jest and epigram: and after that all is a blank.

Swift was a great genius, and, like all great geniuses, he made his power recognized: he did more, he made it by a certain savage energy dominate over all who knew him. Pope, Addison, every one, felt the magnetic power of his presence.

Unquestionably to Swift is to be assigned the uppermost seat in the whole conclave of the prose writers of his day. "In certain fine and deep qualities," says David Masson, "Addison and Steele, and perhaps Farquhar, excelled him; but in natural brawn and strength, in original energy and force and imperiousness of brain, he excelled them all." His genius was thoroughly original, his intellect masculine to coarseness. His nature was terribly earnest, and he threw his whole soul into everything he wrote, which gave his writings that occult power which is the result of individuality. Through this it was that for a time he was more powerful than any minister in England, and held the popular heart of Ireland beating in his grasp. Coleridge, with his usual felicity, says Swift was "the soul of Rabelais dwelling in a dry place." Dry, indeed. Hard, repellent, unsympathizing, he never laughed, while his keen satiric ridicule made all laugh around him. His humour was the humour of Mephistophiles; and some of the most potent satire in "Gulliver's Travels," while it makes the child laugh, makes the man shudder. The style of Swift demands more than a passing comment. Let us endeavour to appreciate it justly, neither overrating nor underrating it, as has been

so constantly its fate. It is strong, pure, simple English; nervous, precise, and undorned; homely, without elegance or grace; with all the coldness of intellect, and without a glow from the heart, it has no heat, save what anger gives it; no playfulness, save what it catches from a bitter, satiric, misanthropic scorn.

The verse of Swift, is verse and no more. It has little claim to be called poetry, save the mechanical one of rhythm. It is hard, unimaginative common sense, witty and satirical, justifying the verdict of Dryden, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet."

JOSEPH ADDISON stands next to Swift as a writer of prose: we have already noticed him briefly as a poet and a dramatist. Like Swift he had a fine sense of humour and a keen power of satire; but there the resemblance ends. His humour is polished and elegant, masked in the finished phraseology of a gentleman, his irony so demure and sly that it is often not perceptible to duller natures, but always the more exquisite for its lurking, playful malice, ever tempered by good breeding and good nature. If his power was great, he never abused it; nothing ungenerous or unkind stained his page; nothing gross or immoral ever sullied it. His pen was ever employed in the enforcement of morality and virtue. He had no taint of misanthropy, no proclivity towards what was low or coarse. In the numbers of the "Tatler," the "Spectator," the "Guardian," and the "Freeholder," to which Addison contributed so largely, as well as in his other prose writings, do we find all those graces of composition, united to purity of sentiment and elevation of thought, which place him at the head of the essayists of England, as he was one of the great fathers of that species of composition, and the forerunner of our novelists. Deeply imbued with classical learning, his style partakes largely of the best writings of Greece and Rome, and exercised a great and beneficial influence on the style of our compositions.

With him is naturally associated the companion of his life from their schoolboy days

in the Charter House till death dissolved their friendship—SIR RICHARD STEELE. To him belongs the honour of having founded the species of periodical literature which, under the title of *essays*, has from his day to that of Mackenzie enriched our literature with so many productions of genius, humour, wit, and learning. It was on April the 12th, 1709, that Steele, already known as a dramatist and writer of pamphlets, published the first number of the "Tatler." Addison, then in Ireland, soon discovered the writer, and joined in the work in its eighteenth number. Nearly all the papers are contributed by either, a few being from the pen of Swift and others. "The Spectator" and "The Guardian" followed in succession. In "The Spectator" appeared those charming portraits of Sir Roger de Coverley and Will Honeycomb, the original conception of which is due to Steele, though Addison ere long took the knight under his own care. If Steele wanted the finish of Addison he had more originality, and was not his inferior in humour, though its quality was not so fine. He wrote with vivacity, clearness, and ease, and some of his more carefully-executed papers bear no unfavourable comparison with those of his friend and fellow-labourer. This species of periodical writing is an important event in the history of literature. It brought together many writers in addition to its projectors. Swift, Tickell, Hughes, Dr. Watts, Parnell, and others contributed, though in small proportions, to its papers. Issued three times a week in sheets, they became exceedingly popular, and were to be found in all the coffee houses. They created a wholesome desire for reading, inculcated sound morality, and elevated the taste of the readers. They may be considered the first attempt at popular literature, though John Dunton's "Athenian Gazette" and De Foe's "Review" had preceded them, and contained the germ that afterwards expanded into the novel. They have also the additional value of reflecting the general manners and character of all classes of the English people. In 1714 was formed the celebrated Scriblerus Club, of

which Dr. John Arbuthnot is said to have been the founder, and his friends Pope, Swift, Harley, Atterbury, and Congreve were among the members. The objects of these wits was to ridicule all the false tastes in learning, under the character of Martinus Scriblerus, a man of sufficient capacity, who is supposed to have a superficial knowledge of every art and science. What portion of the works of the club is to be attributed to each is not positively known, but there is every reason to believe that the first book was the contribution of Arbuthnot, and the "Art of Sinking in Poetry" that of Pope. Arbuthnot was a man of wit, learning, and great moral excellence. Pope and Swift bear cordial testimony to his worth and intellect, and Johnson pronounced him the first man among the wits of Queen Anne's reign.

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, third earl of SHAFTESBURY, was a man of wit, an excellent scholar, and of unimpeachable morals, though of questionable religious opinions. He wrote on moral, political, and philosophical subjects, but his most celebrated work was "Characteristics of Men, Matters, Opinions, and Times." His style was precise, clear, and argumentative, but too elaborate, and filled with figures, ornaments, and oratorical flourishes.

HENRY ST JOHN, Viscount BOLINGBROKE, fills a large place, not only in the history of the politics but of the literature of the time. Distinguished for his talents, brilliancy of conversation, fascinating manners, and beauty of person, he early entered on political life, and filled high offices. With his eventful public career we are not concerned here. He wrote a vast deal on various subjects, chiefly on politics, but also on philosophy, history, and literature. If he was not a deep thinker or a profound reasoner, he was earnest, animated, and brilliant, and seemed intuitively, as it were, to grasp the leading points of whatever subject he handled. Craik has with discrimination observed that his style "was a happy medium between that of the scholar and that of the man of society; or rather, it was a happy combination

of the best qualities of both. The example he has thus set has probably had a considerable effect in moulding the style of popular writing among us since his time.

Few men of his day had a finer wit or more scholarly attainments than FRANCIS ATTERBURY, bishop of ROCHESTER. He took a principal part in the famous controversy between Boyle and Bentley, as to the authenticity of the so-called epistles of Phalaris. He was a most eloquent, fervent preacher, and his sermons were highly esteemed as elegant compositions, and pronounced by Johnson to be in style the best of the time. His controversial writings had great brilliancy and fancy, and were composed in a pure, graceful, and polished language.

Though BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE was a Dutchman, he passed the greater part of his life in London, and gained considerable notoriety as an author. The work by which he is now remembered is his "Fable of the Bees; or, Private Vices Publick Benefits." Whatever be its defects in philosophy, where truth is mixed up with sophism and fallacy, it is one of the most remarkable books of the time, full of curious matter and vigorous writing, with many just and profound observations. There is caustic wit, though coarse, and a lively common-sense style about it that entitle it to a place in the literature of the day.

But a truer philosophy was to be found in the writings of DR SAMUEL CLARKE, "as bright a light and masterly teacher of truth," says Bishop Hoadley, "as ever appeared among us," the defender of the Newtonian philosophy against Leibnitz. As a metaphysician he boldly placed himself in the breach against the necessitarians and fatalists of the times. As a divine, though inclined to Arianism, he explained with masterly skill the subjects on which he wrote, and preached in a style at once clear, plain, accurate, and full. But no philosopher of the time gave rise to more controversy than GEORGE BERKELEY, bishop of CLOYNE, who endeavoured to prove the non-existence of matter in his celebrated work, "The Principles of Human Know-

ledge" (Dublin, 1710), and in "Three Dialogues," which appeared in 1713. These led to a discussion between him and Clarke, in which neither convinced the other, and to one between Berkeley and Malebranche, which accelerated the death of the latter, then labouring under inflammation of the lungs, being, as De Quincey facetiously observes, "murdered by the Irish youth." Berkeley's contributions to literature, in various departments, were numerous and valuable. In the exact sciences, in modern literature, in divinity, and in the fine arts, he was deeply versed; and every one will remember Pope's well-merited tribute to his worth in ascribing

"To Berkeley every virtue under heaven"

"Of the exquisite grace and beauty of his diction," says Sir James Mackintosh, "no man accustomed to English composition can need to be informed. His works are beyond dispute the finest models of philosophical style since Cicero."

A review of the literature of this period which we are closing shows that the tendency of the leading writers was to substitute for the Saxon English a vocabulary in which words formed from the French and the Latin largely predominated. Addison in prose and Pope in poetry illustrate this, and the only great exception is to be found in the strong, pure Anglo-Saxon English of Swift. It was an age, too, of great intellectual activity. There was a reading public daily extending, and a literature growing to supply its wants. The classical literature of Greece and Rome was made familiar to the people by the translations of Dryden, Pope, Creech, Tickell, and Rowe. "There is," observes Mr. Knight, "nothing more characteristic of the eminent writers of the eighteenth century, than the persistent way in which they addressed themselves to the popular understanding." This is true of the works in philosophy, theology, and poetry, as well as the essays and general prose writings. "There was a crowd pressing forward to be instructed, to be pleased, to be amused." A statute passed in the first parliament of

Anne aided the literary movement by securing to authors a copyright in their works, from which we may date the establishment of literature as a profession.

CHAPTER VI

FROM the commencement of the reign of George II. to the death of Samuel Johnson in that of George III., may be taken as another convenient reach in the stream of our literary history, that is, from 1714 to 1784. Pope and Swift, and a few others of the wits of Queen Anne's reign, are still writing; and John Gay has brought out the "Beggar's Opera," opening the reign of George II. and closing his own literary existence: a very remarkable production, for, written to oppose the Italian opera, then in great favour, it originated the ballad opera, which afterwards produced such charming pieces as "The Duenna" and "Love in a Village." It was not until 1737 that SAMUEL JOHNSON, having struggled with poverty, taught as a schoolmaster, and written as a literary hack, made his way to London to fight upwards to the literary supremacy which he at last attained and exercised with a despotic sway. In 1738, when Pope was publishing his "Imitations of Horace," there appeared from an unknown author, "London," a poem in imitation of the third satire of Juvenal, so admirable, that it reached a second edition in a week, and people said, "Here is an unknown poet, greater even than Pope." A greater poet than Pope he was not, nor his equal; but a greater power in literature assuredly this unknown man was destined to become. Pope, to his honour, found him out and helped him in his hard struggle. "The Life of Richard Savage" increased his reputation then followed the tragedy of "Irene," "The Vanity of Human Wishes," and his great prose contributions in the "Rambler," the "Idler," and the "Adventurer," his "Rasselas," his "Dictionary," his "Lives of

the Poets," with numberless pamphlets and essays. All these established Johnson at the head of the literature of his time in England. The universities of Oxford, of Cambridge, and of Dublin, honoured him with degrees, and a pension from George III. made the latter years of his life comfortable. To enumerate or estimate the obligations of our literature to Dr. Johnson is not easy. A tone of high morality pervades all that he has written, and has insensibly given a colour and a character to the whole body of essayists that followed him. With all its magniloquence, verbosity, and ponderous movement, the English of Johnson was vigorous, classical, sonorous, dignified, and perspicuous; eminently felicitous, and full of a fine discriminating wisdom and a polished wit, the result of a sound intellectual faculty, extensive reading, and large experience. As a lexicographer, how much do we not owe him? Though the labours and researches of subsequent linguists and philologists have shown the great short-comings of Johnson, yet we must remember that before his time little or nothing had been done to analyze and fix our language. It must ever be esteemed a gigantic work, and is still the great foundation upon which every subsequent work of the kind has been built up. As a critic he is not always to be depended on. His prejudices, his personal likings and dislikings, often distorted his vision and warped his judgment. But some of his criticisms, as those on Milton and Pope, have high excellence. The writings of Johnson all retain then hold on the reading public, though more or less tenaciously according to their varying merit, they exercised a great influence on the literary style of his own time, and continued to do so, though in a lessening degree, up to ours. Nor was it by his writings alone that Johnson influenced the literature of England. Gathering around him the wit and the learning of his day, he was a central sun, vivifying and illuminating. His conversational powers were extraordinary, and he used them despotically. Weighty, sententious, and oracular, few

dared dispute what he asserted—for few united so much learning with so much strong, vigorous sense, and felicity of illustration. At last, when he was in the height of his power and the zenith of his fame, he founded, in 1764, the celebrated Literary Club, where Goldsmith and Reynolds, Burke and Fox, Colman, Garrick, and Sheridan, Sir William Jones and Gibbon, with many others, owned his supremacy, and listened and learned and discussed, and so, from the contact and collision, were evolved that intellectual heat and light that made the age of Johnson renowned.

There are many names which gave lustre to the poetry of this period, though, on the whole, the productions in that department of literature are inferior to those of Queen Anne's time.

EDWARD YOUNG, already noted as a dramatist, wrote some satires, and, finally, in the midst of domestic afflictions, produced the first part of the work which has given him fame—the "Night Thoughts." With the faults of all his compositions—a style laboured and affected—there is a solemn gloom and a moral dignity pervading it that give it pathos often, and eloquence occasionally; but it is rather a series of metrical sermons than a poem, it has too much of the didactic and too little of the imaginative.

JAMES THOMSON had both the eye and the heart of a poet; he loved nature intensely, and he sang her with as unstudied a wildness as a thrush sings in the woodlands; and so his "Seasons," which appeared in a complete form in 1730, charmed and still charms. In "The Castle of Indolence" Thomson has most successfully imitated, both in measure, style, and language, the "Faery Queen" of Spenser. The allegory is well sustained, and the languid melody of the poem makes it singularly attractive. But for the too frequent introduction of words of Latin origin it would be a perfect antique.

WILLIAM SOMERVILLE, a Warwickshire squire and justice of the peace, sang the joys of country life in "The Chase," and

"Hobbinol, or the Rural Games;" what these want in polish is to some extent atoned for by a life and heartiness and by happy description. Of the pieces he wrote the former only is now remembered.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, in the retirement of his beloved Leasowes, which he beautified, sang "Pastoral Ballads" and songs, in which there is much affectation of passion, and too much about Corydons and Phillises, Damons, Delias, and sheep, "Elegies" which are faultless in versification but feeble, and "The Schoolmistress," in imitation of Spenser in style and measure. This is his best production, and as a solemn burlesque in antique language has great merit. He was a follower of Pope, but he was too indolent and careless to do as well as he might have done. Some of his smaller pieces are simple and graceful.

THOMAS GRAY, the author of the immortal "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," was a ripe scholar as well as a true poet. The popularity of this fine poem is well deserved. A strain of fine moralizing flows on in verses of deliciously mournful harmony, that holds captive the attention from the first to the last stanza. His odes, "The Progress of Poesy" and "The Bard," are all sterling contributions to the poetry of the time.

No poet of his day struck the lyre with a sweeter touch or a bolder sweep than WILLIAM COLLINS, and had he been granted a longer life than one of thirty-six years, and a saner than he enjoyed, he might have won a place among the greater poets of England. His "Ode to the Passions" is a great lyric, such as Dryden might have composed in the happiest moment of inspiration. Every chord of the lyre is stricken, every string trembles with the utterance of diverse and powerful emotions. The "Oriental Eclogues," though somewhat incongruous, are delightfully melodious. The imaginative faculty was strong in Collins, but, as in Keats, it was too much etherealized. He dealt too much with abstractions, too little with humanity, and so his merits were but slowly recognized.

MARK AKENSIDE, a physician, whom

Smollett caricatured in "Peregrine Pickle," published in 1744, being then in his twenty-third year, a poem of great merit, "The Pleasures of Imagination." It is still read, though his other compositions are forgotten.

Many other names might be mentioned, but we pass to that of OLIVER GOLDSMITH. We shall again have to notice him in the department of prose, but whether in his poetical or his prose compositions, he was one of the most delightful and genial authors that ever enriched our literature. In 1764 the booksellers' hack, the gentle, blundering genius, at once the butt and the darling of the literary club just then established, surprised his friends and the world by publishing "The Traveller, or a Prospect of Society." Modelled on the style of Pope, it fell not far short of it in finish, while its poetic excellence was at once acknowledged. If philosophic reflection, pure and lofty morality, vivid and life-like sketches of nature and of man, with exquisite touches of pathos, and the heart-yearning of a loving nature, all clothed in harmonious versification and language dignified, pure, and simple; if all these constitute poetry, then must we pronounce "The Traveller" a poem to which it would not be easy to find anything equal since the days of Pope. So said Johnson, and other critics were not less chary of praise. "The Deserted Village," which appeared in 1770, was received with unanimous praise. There are some who pronounce it inferior to "The Traveller;" in this judgment I cannot concur. As a poem, I think it on the whole superior; its pathos is even deeper, for it has all the tenderness of home life and home affections, its delineations of scenery and social habits are more picturesque, its morality is as high and pure, and it has a gentle humour and innocuous satire not found in its predecessor. We pass over other poems, "The Haunch of Venison," "The Hermit," and many a sweet or humorous ballad, to notice the last effort of his muse, which was found unfinished on his desk when his spirit had passed away. The history of the "Retaliation" is well known. The wit and

vigour and truth with which every character is dissected in the happiest verse and language, the depth of observation and the fine appreciation of others which pervade the whole, are not more remarkable than the gentle, loving, Christian spirit in which he takes his revenge, if revenge it can be called, where the wound has no sting and is instantly healed by praise.

Of a very different spirit was CHARLES CHURCHILL, the author of the "Rosciad," and other satirical pieces. A priest without morality, a satirist whose life was a public scandal, he wrote rough, hasty, careless verse with a savage, bitter vigour, when "the mad fit" came on him. He had a popularity that was partly the result of his appeals to the passion of the hour, and partly of the fear he inspired, and which perished with him. He has been likened to Dryden for energetic boldness, to Pope for his bitterness; but there the likeness ends. In wit, in genius, in poetic power, he was immeasurably below them. RICHARD GLOVER, the author of "Leonidas" and "Hozier's Ghost," and WILLIAM MASON, the author of "The English Garden," some odes, elegies, and other pieces, had each a reputation in his day. Nor from the roll of poets must we omit the name of THOMAS WARTON, who, like his father, filled the chair of poetry in Oxford, and attained the equivocal honour of laureate. If Warton had not a great poetic genius, he was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of classical poetry, and has left some highly finished translations from the Greek poets, as well as many pleasing original compositions. But we owe him deep obligations for his able "History of English Poetry," in which he laid down sound rules of criticism, and thereby "assisted materially in guiding as well as strengthening the reviving love for our older national poetry." Scotland too, furnished her quota, chief of whom were ALLAN RAMSAY, whose "Gentle Shepherd" and numerous poems and songs were highly popular; WILLIAM FALCONER, whose poem of "The Shipwreck" is one of the most remarkable in the language for the skill

and poetic power with which it deals with the conduct of a ship in the perilous emergency of impending wreck, and the introduction of nautical terms and rules of seamanship; and DR. JAMES BEATTIE, the accomplished author of "The Minstrel." In concluding our sketch of the poetry of the Johnsonian era, we are bound to notice the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," collected by DR. THOMAS PERCY, bishop of Dromore. Though there is good reason to believe that the bulk of this collection is of more recent origin than the bishop supposed, their value to English poetry is great; and Scott and many others have confessed their obligations to them. The singularly clever series of forgeries of the Rowley papers by that marvellous boy, THOMAS CHATTERTON, in his seventeenth year, is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of our poetic literature. That he should have composed these poems with a skill that deceived many critics and raised a literary controversy is little short of miraculous, and it is impossible to say to what height such a prodigy of genius would have risen had he not put an end to his own existence before he reached his eighteenth year. The poems of Ossian, published by JAMES MACPHERSON, based on Celtic traditions existing in Scotland and Ireland, are to be added to the forgeries of the period.

During the Johnsonian era the contributions to the drama were sufficiently numerous, but, with a few exceptions, they did not do much to advance it. Its commencement is marked by DAVID GARRICK, its termination by RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN. As a playwright, though he wrote or altered for the stage over forty pieces, Garrick has done less for the drama than as a manager and an actor. An ardent lover of Shakspeare, he excited a noble emulation to represent worthily the works of the great national poet, and gave an impetus to dramatic writing, forming an era in the history of the English Theatre. His original compositions are, "The Lying Valet" and "Miss in her Teens." His claim to the authorship of "The Clandestine Marriage"

is doubtful: it is believed that Colman wrote the greater part, if not the whole of it. Johnson's tragedy of "Irene" was a dramatic failure.

JOHN HOME, a Scotch clergyman, produced in 1756, on the stage in Edinburgh, his tragedy of "Douglas," which threw that sober town into an uproar of delight, and its success was endorsed by a London audience. Though now rarely played, it held possession of the stage for near a century—a proof of its great merit. It is the only one of his fine dramas that was successful. "The Liar" and "The Mayor of Garratt" are among the best plays of SAMUEL FOOTE, the English Aristophanes, who wrote over twenty pieces. He had great comic humour and broad farcical mirth, which helped largely to the success of his pieces, in which he acted. CHARLES MACKLIN, whose personation of Shylock won the praise of Pope, wrote ten plays, of which "The Man of the World," and "Love à la Mode," were very successful. ARTHUR MURPHY's comedies of "The Way to keep Him," and "All in the Wrong," are admirably written and deservedly popular, while his tragedy of "The Grecian Daughter" displays high art and genius. GEORGE COLMAN'S "Polly Honeycomb," and "The Jealous Wife," and the dramatic pieces of GEORGE STEVENS, deserve commemoration; and RICHARD CUMBERLAND, a man of varied scholarship, amongst his contributions to literature in several departments, produced some comedies of unquestionable merit, and a higher tone of morality than dramatic literature can always claim. To two writers, who, like Murphy and Macklin, were Irishmen, must be awarded the praise of having produced the best comedies of the age. In 1768 appeared "The Good-natured Man" of OLIVER GOLDSMITH, and in 1773, "She Stoops to Conquer." This last continues to charm as much as when at first it carried all hearts with it. Its humour, though broad and farcical, is never coarse; the dialogue is vivacious, the characters are thoroughly natural, and the situations and ludicrous incidents add great liveliness, and produce

the happiest stage effects. But RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN has eclipsed all his contemporaries as a dramatist. Not to speak of "The Critic," and "The Duenna," the latter in its way a perfect work of art, and "The Rivals," "The School for Scandal" has nothing superior to it as a comedy. Inferior to none of those who preceded him in wit, the ease and sprightliness which he infuses into his dialogue, the truth with which he delineates character, and the happy contrasts with which he surprises, are all his own. "The School for Scandal" to this day maintains its supremacy in the classic comedy of England.

At the head of the prose writers of this period stands EDMUND BURKE. Born and educated in Ireland, he found in London, where he came in 1750, the fitting arena for his genius and learning. From his first publication in 1756 till 1794, he continually occupied a large share of public attention as a writer on politics, philosophy, and literature; as a profound thinker, an eloquent orator, a masterly debater, and a great statesman. The exaggeration is pardonable which called him "a prodigy of nature and acquisition. He read every thing; he saw every thing; he foresaw every thing." We need not enumerate writings which are known to every one, or dwell on them in detail. In a most elaborate and acute summary of Burke as a writer Lord Brougham observes—"He was a writer of the first class, and excelled in almost every kind of prose composition. The extraordinary depth of his detached views, the penetrating sagacity which he occasionally applies to the affairs of men and their motives, and the curious felicity of expression with which he unfolds principles, and traces resemblances and relations, are separately the gift of few, and in their union probably without any example. In description he can hardly be surpassed, at least for effect; he has all the qualities that conduce to it—ardour of purpose, sometimes rising into violence—vivid, but too luxuriant, fancy—bold, frequently extravagant, conception; the faculty of shedding upon mere inanimate scenery the light

imparted by moral association." Whether we consider the large space he occupied in the public eye, his genius, his learning, his masterly compositions, and his multiform powers, natural and acquired, the name of Edmund Burke will ever mark the era in which he dominated almost as greatly in literature as in politics.

Whoever was the author of the celebrated letters of JUNIUS (and the great weight of evidence adduced in this long-standing controversy tends powerfully to the belief that he was Sir Philip Francis*), he was assuredly a literary as well as a political power. Between January, 1769, and January, 1772, appeared in *The Public Advertiser* sixty-nine letters, forty-four of which bear the signature of Junius, and fifteen that of Philo-Junius, which burst upon the English people like a sudden blaze, and kept their vision fixed upon them with wonder to the end. Apart from their deep political sagacity and large political knowledge, as compositions they were remarkable for a boldness that scorned all danger, a freedom that exposed all abuses, a satire that scathed all on whom it lighted, a lofty morality and a stern integrity, and all this written in prose vigorous, weighty, sonorous, and lucid. No wonder that the pen of Junius was as a talisman that swayed the popular mind, a shaft that made men wonder and tremble, for they knew not whence it came or where it might strike.

In connection with Junius, though preceding him, must be mentioned the political writings of JOHN WILKES in the *North Briton*, from June, 1762, to the April of the following year, and elsewhere, though they have no high merit as literary compositions.

In history great contributions were made to our literature. In 1754 DAVID HUME, a Scotchman already known by his writings on philosophy, ethics, and politics, published the first volume of his "History of England," which was completed by the sixth

* This question may now be considered as settled in favour of Francis by a volume published in 1871. "The Handwriting of Junius professionally investigated by Mr. Charles Chabot, Expert, with preface and collateral evidence by the Honourable Edward Twissleton."

volume in 1762. Notwithstanding its faults of carelessness, inaccuracy, and partiality, it possesses such sterling merits that it is an English classic which will ever hold its place in our literature. A clearness of narrative, a spirit of philosophic investigation, a style so calm and beautiful that it possesses an irresistible charm which secures the work an undiminished popularity. The continuation of Hume's history by TOBIAS SMOLLETT enhances the value of the former at the expense of the latter.

DR. WILLIAM ROBERTSON, the friend and compatriot of Hume, made a name by the publication of his "History of Scotland" in 1759, and extended his reputation by his "History of Charles V" in 1769. Another important work in the same department was his "History of America" in 1777. The exhaustive histories of Prescott have well nigh superseded the last two works, the first still stands high. Robertson had a singular power of narration joined to a reflective spirit and sound sense, and his style had a certain elegance though somewhat formal. But high above all stands the illustrious author of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," EDWARD GIBBON. In 1776 he gave to the world the first volume, and the last in 1778, of "the labour of six quartos and twenty years." One does not wonder at the avidity with which these volumes were purchased, so that a few days exhausted the editions. Rarely can we find in our literature such wealth of learning, views and reflections so masterly and comprehensive, such splendour of language, grand, classical, and harmonious. And yet withal we feel at times oppressed by its unvarying elaborateness, chilled by its frigidity; and in its keenest wit we find a lurking sneer against what we deem the holiest and the best convictions of our moral sense. A host of other names attest the fertility of this period in historical literature.

The most remarkable feature of the literature of this period is the "novel." Swift and De Foe had led the way in the preceding era. SAMUEL RICHARDSON, a bookseller in London, published in 1740 the first part of

"Pamela," with the avowed intention to turn young people from reading the romances then translated or imitated from the French, by narrating, in simple and natural manner, incidents of ordinary life, dismissing the improbable and marvellous. Truth and nature will ever find a ready response in any state of society which is not utterly depraved, and so "Pamela" was in every one's hands. In 1751 he published "Clarissa Harlowe," and in 1754 "Sir Charles Grandison." Though now-a-days there are few who have the courage or perseverance to read through those almost interminable stories, one can well understand the popularity of such healthy writings when they first appeared. Nor is the merit of Richardson to be estimated lowly. If his language was inelegant and sometimes low, and his sentiments highflown, his power of minute painting of character was wonderful, and showed an accurate knowledge of humanity. And if he painted scenes of vice and dissoluteness with too much freedom, it was ever with the intent of exposing their deformity and commending virtue. HENRY FIELDING, who had tried his hand at dramatic literature, published in 1742 "The Adventures of Joseph Andrews," intended as a burlesque on "Pamela" and an imitation of the style of Cervantes. Whether he succeeded in either object or not, he touched the public humour, and had a host of readers. He had found at last his true vocation, and in 1749 published "Tom Jones," a novel which has given him immortality. "Amelia" followed in 1751. As a novelist Fielding was without an equal in his own times, without a superior up to ours. Who has surpassed him in photographic portraiture of character, in grave irony, in genial humour, in constructive ability? In our judgment TOBIAS SMOLLETT falls far short of Fielding as a novelist. "Peregrine Pickle" will bear no comparison with "Tom Jones." We laugh with Smollett as we do with Fielding, but the first is only farcical, while the last is witty. Yet both "Peregrine Pickle" and "Roderick Random" will always find

readers. There is one other to whom we refer with mingled feelings of pleasure and pain—LAURENCE STERNE. A genius who profaned his gift; a Rabelais in a cassock; one who defiled his fine imagination with the filth of prurient thoughts. A very magician of language, he delights now to evoke the blush of outraged modesty, now the throb of excited sensibility; now to convulse with laughter at some pleasant, harmless humour, now to draw tears at some tale of sorrow. Of his writings, "Tristram Shandy" is the best and the worst. Captain Shandy, Uncle Toby, and Corporal Trim have become as really historical characters as Wellington or Napoleon, and are drawn with infinite subtlety and discrimination. "The Sentimental Journey" is full of the finest pathos and the pleasantest humour, but even there, too, we find a prurient fancy exercising at times an irresistible fascination upon him. Thackeray has cried when he says Sterne was a great jester, and not a great humorist. His fault is that, being a great humorist, he condescended to be a jester too. But of all the novelists of the day none more enduringly charms than OLIVER GOLDSMITH in "The Vicar of Wakefield." It has faults and incongruities, yet no one thinks of them except the critic, and he does not care to dwell on them, but dismisses them with a smile; but it has beauties that are perennial. "Here," as I have elsewhere observed,* "we have satire, the gentlest that ever fell from pen; pungent, but the pungency of a pleasant acid, without one drop of gall; humour the quaintest, the simplest, the slyest; wit that sparkles like dew-drops; pathos that makes its way right to the heart; and withal, and above all, an exquisite power of delineating the foibles that make one smile, as well as the fortitude that makes the eye moist."

Not may we close this period without remarking upon the general spread of learning in various directions. In 1751 a circulating library was established by William Hutton in Birmingham. In the com-

mencement of the second quarter of the eighteenth century there were but twenty-eight printing presses in all the corporate towns in England, while before its close there was one in every principal town to publish its newspaper. Magazines, which commenced with the *Gentleman's* in 1731, were multiplied tenfold, and grew into reviews, where Johnson and Goldsmith and many others did hack work, "obtaining an almost absolute command over the national thought, by lighting up the obscure places with knowledge, and by bringing the remote places into easy communication."

CHAPTER VII

PROFESSOR CRAIK well observes that "the death of Samuel Johnson, in the end of the year 1784, makes a pause or distinction in our literature hardly less notable than the acknowledgment of the independence of America the year before in our political history." Literary kingship was over for ever. Henceforth we speak not of literary epochs, as the age of Chaucer, or of Shakespeare, or of Dryden, or of Johnson. Let us be content to deal with the residue of our literary annals merely chronologically.

The portion of the eighteenth century that remained after the death of Johnson still bears in its literature the impress it had received, it was widening and deepening; the occupation of the many, not the monopoly of the few, and writers in every department were increasing in number. Johnson had scarcely passed away when a poet arose who had the boldness and originality to break through conventional trammels and inaugurate a new school. WILLIAM COWPER, born in 1731, published his first volume of poems in 1782. He dared to use popular language, to aim at earnest teaching of truth in vigorous didactic verse, rather than to linger over imaginary sentiment in feebly harmonious numbers. The didactic, the philosophical, the moral were the inspirations of his muse. He sang

* *Life of Goldsmith*, by J. F. Waller, LL.D. Cassell, Petter, & Galpin, London

home-life and home affections, human life and human failings; he preached religion and denounced immorality, and all with a freshness and simplicity peculiarly his own. His popularity was not immediate, but it grew steadily with each succeeding publication till it attained to the highest. No matter what schools of poetry may arise, what changes may come over our literary tastes, the poems of Cowper will ever find a mirroring readers

In strong contrast to Cowper is ERASMUS DARWIN, the author of the "Botanic Garden." Elaborate, artificial, full of conceits, natural history wanders in the domain of the muses to find herself out of place. Yet we must not deny to Darwin poetic genius, and there are many fine passages to attest it. The fault lay in the subject and the treatment of it, and was incurable. Yet had Darwin a world of admirers and no few imitators. How few now read his "Loves of the Plants" how many remember the name only in connection with the clever parody, "The Loves of the Triangles."

JOHN GIFFORD, more notable in the early part of the next century as a critic, deserves mention as the demolisher of what was known as the Della Cruscan school of poetry, the productions of a coterie of male and female writers who affected the Italian style, and put forth volumes of inane and florid verse. These were exposed in a satirical poem of Gifford's, the "Bæviad," in imitation of Persius, published in 1794. Its vigour and causticity attracted general attention. The following year he produced the "Mæviad," in imitation of Horace, a poem satirizing the low state of the dramatic authorship of the day, not inferior to its predecessor. Among his other poems was an epistle to the celebrated DR. JOHN WOLCOT, better known by his pseudonym of "Peter Pindar." Under this title Wolcot produced, from 1782 to the end of the century, a series of attacks in rhyme called "Lyrical Odes," in which he assailed the Royal Academy and various established authorities, literary, social, and political, till he attained his climax of scurrility by inde-

cent abuse of the king. Everybody read these compositions. In style they were thoroughly original: a verse, whose metrical freedom gave full scope to every varying sentiment, enabled him to indulge a genius pungent, humorous, and not without fancy; but he is coarse, irreverent, and extravagant, and his criticisms are marred by personal malevolence, and his portraitures are caricatures. He had a great popularity, and has had many imitators in a school of versification which he may be said to have founded. We pass over a host of minor poets and poetesses to close the century with a name that will ever stand prominently forward in its literary annals.

ROBERT BURNS, a Scottish peasant, one of the people, was the greatest poet that ever sprang from the bosom of the people. In him the poetic element abounded in almost prodigal affluence, and developed itself by its native force, little aided by education, in a thousand forms of beauty. Writing in a dialect to which the English ear was little accustomed, he made it the vehicle of every feeling—love, humour, pathos, joy, sorrow, mad revelry, sharp satire. Artistic he was not, but he had high art, even in his very artlessness. Tried by the rules of art, many of his poems are defective, yet they challenge the verdict of a tribunal beyond art and above it, which has pronounced them perfect. There are lyrics of Burns which touch with equal potency the soul of the prince and the ploughman, for they are intensely human and appeal to our common humanity. The poetry of Burns exercised no small influence over the mind of his country, had his life been extended to the ordinary length, his genius might have elevated him to a place still higher.

Little need be said of the productions of the dramatists. No great name meets us after that of Sheridan till we enter well into the nineteenth century. Yet the contributions to comedy and tragedy were numerous. JOHN O'KLEFE wrote over fifty pieces, some of which, such as the "Poor Soldier," still keep the stage. The younger COLMAN followed his father, but with unequal steps.

MRS. ELIZABETH INCHBALD, to the graces of person and charms of acting, added many comedies to the drama, whose history she illustrated by her publication of "The British Theatre" and "The Modern Theatre," with biographical and critical remarks.

CHARLES DIBDIN, whose family is notable in the history of song, contributed forty-seven dramas, and lives yet fresh in the memory of sailors, who delight in his songs. In the various departments of prose writings each had representative men, in literary criticism, LORD KAMES, DR GEORGE CAMPBELL, and DR HUGH BLAIR, in philology, JOHN HORNE TOOKE, in his "Diversions of Purley," has left us a work on the philosophy of language, a worthy successor to James Harris' "Hermes," while in both the fore-going departments the name of the accomplished SIR WILLIAM JONES is prominent.

DR THOMAS REID, by his various metaphysical essays, did much towards the advancement of mental science. The modern system of political economy may be said to have first taken shape in ADAM SMITH'S great work, "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations," which has caused us to forget his valuable contributions to moral philosophy. In this last department DR WILLIAM PALEY stands out pre-eminent by his treatise on "The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy," in which he methodized with masterly skill the heavy and desultory work of Abraham Tucker, "The Light of Nature Pursued." Paley, too, is the connecting link between moral philosophy and theology in his works on "Natural Theology," his "Evidences of Christianity," and his "Horæ Paulinæ;" and with him must be mentioned the able defender of religion against Gibbon and Paine, RICHARD WATSON, bishop of Llandaff, in his "Apology for Christianity" and "Apology for the Bible." Novels and essays were abundant. WILLIAM GODWIN'S remarkable novel of "Caleb Williams;" FRANCES BURNES'S (afterwards known as Madame D'Arbly) "Evelina," "Cecilia," and "Camilla;" the novels of MRS. CHAR-

LOTTE SMITH and the romances of MRS. ANNE RADCLIFFE, belong to this period.

CHAPTER VIII.

As the stream of literature flows out of the eighteenth into the nineteenth century, we mark it gradually increasing in volume—deeper and wider, thought becoming more diffused, reading becoming more general, and the appetite for literary food demanding and receiving increased supply. Two great events in the latter portion of the previous century exercised an influence on the thought of the nation—the War of Independence in America and the French Revolution. Men became more real and earnest, and these feelings were reflected in our literature.

Let us turn to our poetry, ever the most sensitive test of popular thought and feeling. No poet of the times exhibits more plainly than does GEORGE CRABBE this change of which we speak. A mannerist in style, a skilful anatomist of character, and a terribly truthful expositor of human life, he reflects the two ages in which he lived and wrote. "The Library" and "The Village" had appeared in the days of Johnson. For twenty years after he uttered no sound, till in 1807 he published "The Parish Register," singing on at intervals till in 1819 he closed with the greatest of all his poems, "The Tales of the Hall." To every reader the change between his earlier and later compositions must be evident; the didactic and almost prosaic narrative of the first giving place to deep, passionate, poetic feeling in the latter.

Meantime a new school of poetry was inaugurated by WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, which was destined to engage a good deal of public attention, and to invite severe criticism and not a little ridicule. The history of this school demands a passing notice. In 1793 Wordsworth had published a few descriptive poems, and in 1798 and 1800 appeared two volumes of "Lyrical Ballads," chiefly from his pen, to the last of which he added a preface, expounding his

poetic theory at great length. Protesting against "the gaudiness and inane phraseology" which many modern writers adopted as "poetic diction," he proposed to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate and describe them throughout as far as was possible in a language really used by men in a state of vivid sensation, deeming that all good poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," and further asserting, that "the language of a large portion of every poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of prose." Besides these main features of his theory there are others which we do not notice, but it must be observed that in what he has propounded no small portion of what is sound is not new, and some of what is new is not sound. Indeed, his colleague in putting forward and illustrating this new theory, S. T. Coleridge (to whom was assigned the province of the unreal and supernatural, leaving to Wordsworth the realities of every-day life), thought it necessary, at a subsequent period, to state in several elaborate papers in his "Biographia Literaria" the points in which he differed from his friend. It is not to be denied that these "Lyrical Ballads" are not unfrequently degraded by meanness of diction, and disfigured by puerilities of expression, which are as offensive as the inanity and affectations against which Wordsworth protests. Happily, however, the truer instincts of his genius led him often to forget or violate his own rules, and in after years greatly to modify his views. But, with all his faults and excesses, there was too much of the vitality of genius in almost everything he wrote to suffer him to fail or to succumb, and so, after a quarter of a century, he won his way to be the greatest English poet of common life, and to teach his country that the domains of poetry had a larger ambit than critics were wont to admit. Without alluding in detail to the various subjects which his poems embrace, and which he has himself classified,

we feel justified in pronouncing Wordsworth a great and original poet; and though his school cannot be said to have ever established itself in our literature, his writings have tinctured the poetic thought and poetic style of his age. If he had little wit, he had an elevated imagination, that dealt rather with the speculative than the fanciful. If his sense of humour was so defective that the attempt to be humorous generally resulted in being ridiculous, he had genuine tenderness, and at times an exquisite simplicity of expression, and a common-sense wisdom that made him utter thoughts that became proverbs. Above all, he had an ardent love of nature, and an exquisite perception of the beauties of the outward world. Yet we are constrained to say that not a little that Wordsworth has written is not poetry, because it wanders beyond the domains of poetry, and is only metrical philosophy, whether in ethics or religion or politics. The two other chiefs of "The Lake School," as it was called, were SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE and ROBERT SOUTHY. Each of these presents a strong contrast to Wordsworth. Coleridge had an intellect capacious and subtle, an imagination morbidly transcendental and dreamy, that delighted in the unreal, and a mental activity that was vigorous, but intermittent in its efforts, and so he left behind him less than might have been expected, and some of it incomplete and unmethodical. A vast range of knowledge and learning, that he poured forth with lavish and inexhaustible flow, a fine sense of humour, a ready and sharp wit, a felicity of illustration, and a great power of reasoning, made him one of the most remarkable men of his day. As poems, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," "Christabel," and "Genevieve," are compositions of high art informed by high genius, unsurpassed by any similar productions in our language. His poetry is perfect in rhythmic melody, tender and most delicate in sentiment, and spiritualized in imagination. Many other poems of Coleridge are of the highest order. The prose

writings of Coleridge are original, brilliant, subtle, and argumentative, and yet they constantly leave on the mind a sense of incompleteness. His conversation was matchless for its vividness, variety, and felicity of expression.

Undoubtedly the divine gift of poetry was vouchsafed to ROBERT SOUTHEY in a less liberal measure than to Wordsworth or Coleridge. In his numerous poems we see the triumph of thought and labour, the flowers of artificial culture rather than the outspring of the richness of the native soil. Imitative rather than original, notwithstanding the range of subjects and boldness of treatment, he exhibits the body rather than the soul of poetry. Yet it must not be denied that in "Thalaba," "The Curse of Kehama," "Madoc," "Don Roderick," and the Spanish Ballads, he has produced works admirable in poetic diction, fine description, and rich imagery. It is only when, as Laureate, he wrote to order, that he sank below even mediocrity. We shall speak of him hereafter as a writer of prose. In conjunction with these WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES finds a place. His sonnets, which appeared at the end of the previous century, greatly influenced the poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge. Allied to this school in some respects, though differing from it in others, are Shelley and Keats. No poet of his day soared upon a stronger wing, or gazed with a bolder glance, through the higher realms of thought and imagination, than PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. All must censure "Queen Mab," many will disapprove of much in the "Revolt of Islam," but no one can read the "Prometheus Unbound," "Alastor," or "The Cenci," without feeling that he is in the presence of a poetic genius of the highest order. Many of his odes, such as "The Skylark," and the "Cloud," are surpassingly charming. Nevertheless, through most of his writings we have the painful sense of the workings of an unhealthy and over-sensitive nature, scorning human sympathies, and taking refuge in wild fancies.

Of a nature somewhat cognate to Shel-

ley's was that of JOHN KEATS, the author of "Hyperion," "Endymion," and several other pieces. Though very contradictory estimates are formed by eminent critics of Keats' writings, there is no doubt that he had a mind of great and original power, and possessed in a large degree the poetic faculty but these gifts were under no restraint, and he suffered his genius to run wild into metaphysical mazes and extravagances. It is possible he mistook his true mission in poetry. Had he lived it is likely he would have reformed both his style and modes of thought, and been a great poet.

It was in the fifth year of this century that WALTER SCOTT charmed the world with the first of those lyrical romances which were to make that species of writing the most popular of the time, and a feature in our literature. Heretofore he had gained consideration by the publication of translations from the German and "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border." But "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" showed what the romance of real life, the chivalrous deeds, the stirring adventures, and the household traditions of a nation may become in the hands of an original genius with a narrative and dramatic power, vivid and picturesque. "Seldom," says Professor Jellott in an admirable lecture on the poetry of Scott, "has the world of letters witnessed a more stirring event than the publication of 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel.' The public turned with absolute relief from stuffed figures to the real living men of Sir Walter Scott. His moss troopers came down upon the reading public as vigorous as ever did their prototypes on merry Carlisle." And yet there was no lack of adverse criticism. The work was a daring innovation on conventional forms and modes. But a truer instinct and a higher tribunal than the critic overruled criticism, and pronounced in favour of the "Lay." So, too, it did when "Marmion," and "Rokeby," and "Don Roderick," and "The Lord of the Isles," followed; and the poems of Scott were popular and wide-spread, beyond those of any of his contemporaries. They greatly

err and have no catholic spirit who say, as a modern critic has said, that Scott was no poet, but "a mere ballad-monger." The domains of poetry are not so circumscribed as some are wont to imagine. Poetry is multiform and many-sided; and in every composition we should look for the true elements of poetry, and not for the special form in which they are cast, and wherever these are found we have a poem. If the minstrel in the narrative of real events tells his story, as Scott has done, with a vivid, picturesque power of word and figure that places men and scenes before you till your heart leaps up at the blay of the clarion and the rush of the battle, or melts at the tale of woe, that paints all the charms of nature, and reveals all the passions of humanity in verse rapt and harmonious, if he be not a poet, then have we to unlearn the error of ages, and reconsider the orthodoxy of the worship which the world has so long accorded to Homer and Virgil. To Scott is due the commencement of a new era of narrative poetry, which has almost wholly superseded the merely didactic and descriptive orders of verse, and which is not incompatible with the most refined and the most subtle revelations of poetic feeling. This was soon evidenced. THOMAS CAMPBELL, who had already earned high reputation by his didactic poem, "The Pleasures of Hope," and by some of the finest lyrics in our language, produced his narrative poem, "Gertrude of Wyoming," in 1809, not indeed to increase his fame, but to render his adhesion to the new school. The veteran SAMUEL ROGERS, the author of "The Pleasures of Memory," turned from the didactic to the narrative, and wrote "Jacqueline" in 1814. Of Crabbe's change we have already spoken. And, greatest of all, GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON, who in the rashness of youthful criticism called Scott's narrative poems "stale romances" and "black-letter ballad imitations," became a convert to the new faith. In 1813 his first narrative poem, "The Giaour," showed how thoroughly he appreciated the power of romantic poetry. "The Bride of Abydos" in the same year,

"The Corsair" and "Lara" in the year following, and "The Siege of Corinth" in 1816, are all admirable contributions to the school of narrative poetry. Nay, strange to say, these works of the disciple had warned the master that a greater than he had come, and so Scott abandoned the field of the narrative romantic poetry when Byron occupied it, and betook himself to the composition of those novels that have made him peerless in the world. Whether Lord Byron was or was not the greatest poet of his age is a controversy into which we shall not enter. If not "primus inter pares," he was amongst those peers who, in the aristocracy of talent, are far removed from the mass of literary men. "The Hours of Idleness," the production of his nonage, though containing here and there a striking passage, gave little promise of his future greatness. The sharp criticisms of the "Edinburgh Review" stung him into a retort; and "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" showed the world that there was more in the young lord than his critics dreamed of. With all the faults of this "ferocious rhapsody," as in his more matured judgment and cooler temper Byron himself called it, one sees that he who wrote it could think vigorously and had a trenchant wit; and it is not a little to his credit that in after years he made many a generous recantation of his unjust censures, and sought to suppress the work altogether. Two years' travel in the East was followed by the two first cantos of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" in 1812. In the measure of Spenser, it at once attracted attention by its stately march, its philosophic thought, and fine descriptive pictures of the regions through which he conducts his readers, though it is deficient in the force and elevation to which the author attained in the later cantos, which made the whole one of the finest compositions of its kind in the language. The fame of Byron was growing daily, and not a little enhanced by the mystery that surrounded his social life, and the misanthropy and scorn with which he defied public opinion, and, perhaps we may add, public morality. In his tragedy of

"Manfred" we have the terrible workings of a perturbed, gloomy spirit, haughty and defiant, and attaining a certain sublimity in its very despair. A grand poem it is, however, with all its wild and undefined horror, relieved with exquisite lyrics, as fitful and breathing as solemn and ghostly music as the lute strings that sing in the night breeze. But the climax of all those worst feelings in Byron's nature were attained in "Cain," which appeared in 1821. This extraordinary poem at once enthralled the heart and outraged the moral feelings of the age. It dealt with daring scepticism and in a scoffing spirit with what men regarded as the holiest and most reverential truths, and withal in a splendour of poetic thought and language, and a largeness and grandeur of conception, with which nothing could compare since the epic of Milton, while its passion and dramatic effect were of the highest. Of his other dramas and poems we need not speak. Let us notice the most remarkable of all his productions—"Don Juan." In this poem Byron seems to have revelled in the luxuriance of genius and to have given the reins to his fancy. With beauties of thought and verse, the dazzling play of wit, deep philosophic thought, high imaginative musings that are to be found in lavish abundance throughout, we are shocked with grossnesses that are insults to all good taste and good feeling, a mocking scepticism that outrages morality, so that it is a sealed book to a large portion of readers. One of his apologists asserts that "Don Juan," if rightly read, is not immoral, because whatever are its offences against religion and decency it is a crusade against all that is false and base in human nature. But this plea is rejected by the instincts of our better nature and the unsophisticated teachings of our common sense. The exhibition of vice and sin may be moral. It is so if the moralist, in the discharge of a stern and holy duty, exposes the social sores that he may heal them; if he shows immorality in its loathsomeness, that deters while it disgusts. But he who exhibits the sins and frailties of our nature so as often to

extenuate them, and sometimes to make them even alluring, is no more like a moralist than he who spreads the infection of the plague to destroy is like him who vaccinates to save. Byron, it has been truly said, represents the reaction of the nineteenth century against the thought and forms of the eighteenth. While he professed the highest admiration for the style and poetry of Pope, no one did more to render unpopular and unfashionable that very school of which he declared himself a disciple. Indeed, Byron founded a school himself, and had many imitators of his worst and most attainable qualities, and it has taken half a century to work off the national mind many of the evil influences of the Byron school.

No lyric poet of our times has a larger popularity than THOMAS MOORE. If he could not strike out the thunder sounds from the lyre which the strong hand of Campbell evoked, he made it ring with the most tuneful melody, with the airiest mirth, with the deepest sorrow. It may safely be affirmed that no such collection of lyrics from a single author are to be found in any language as "The Irish Melodies" and "The National Melodies" of Moore. They have found their way into every country, and despite of the changes of taste and fashion, retain an undiminished popularity. Moore possessed wit, humour, imagination, and the keenest and most polished vein of satire, a wealth of imagery and a mastery of language that make every page glow and glitter like a parterre of flowers. Besides satirical and political poems, he essayed a higher strain in "Lalla Rookh" and "The Loves of the Angels." Great poems they are not, but no one can read a page of either without delight and admiration. Nowhere can we find more gorgeous colouring, more splendid imagery, more tenderness, more passion, more voluptuousness, than in these poems. With the exception of "The Epicurean," essentially a poem, the prose writings of Moore add nothing to his fame.

LEIGH HUNT deserves a passing notice. His "Story of Rimini," in 1816, has great merit, and many of his other poetical

compositions are graceful and sprightly. It is to be regretted that they are often disfigured by farfetched phrases and conceits.

We now enter upon the last epoch of our century, when we have to do with poets within the memory of all, and many either living or recently dead. The field is so vast that we must be contented with the briefest notice of the leading and representative names of the various departments of poetry. Of those who have been recently among us, JOHN WILSON, better known as the 'Christopher North' of Blackwood, links the past with almost the present. "The Isle of Palms," written in 1812, has fine melodious and imaginative passages. "The City of the Plague" rises higher and approaches occasionally to grandeur. Among the religious poets are to be noted, JAMES MONTGOMERY, whose "World before the Flood" and "Pelican Island" have many beauties; ROBERT MONTGOMERY, whose "Satan," "Messiah," "Woman," and other poems have been alike over-censured and over-praised; the pious and learned bishop of Calcutta, REGINALD HEBER, the author of "Palestine" and other fine poems, but in chief remembered for those exquisite hymns which he has left for the service of the church, so pure, elevated, simple, and touching, that they are interwoven permanently with the worship of English churchmen throughout the world. With him may be associated the greatest of all our modern hymnologists, JOHN KEBLE, the author, amongst other sacred compositions, of the "Lyra Innocentium," and "The Christian Year," full of Christian poetry, pure, beautiful, serene, and lofty. "In him," says Professor Wilson, "piety inspires genius, and fancy and feeling are celestialized by religion."

ROBERT POLLOK, who died at the early age of twenty-seven, left a poem, the "Course of Time," which with all the faults inseparable from youth and want of mature cultivation needful for a subject so vast and profound, is a very extraordinary poem, full of genius and power, which gives reason to believe that had he lived he would have been a great poet. The "Festus" of PHILIP

JAMES BAILEY is a poem of remarkable power and thought, indicating poetic genius of a high order. The poetry of the affections is best represented by FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS, whose "Forest Sanctuary," "Records of Woman," and several lyrical pieces, are full of a fine, tender, poetic feeling, eminently feminine in their delicacy and grace, though never rising to higher flights. LETITIA ELIZABETH LANDON, afterwards Mrs. Maclean, wrote from the depths of a deeper and more passionate nature, and deals with the emotions of love as one who felt its stirring to be painful as well as pleasurable.

Higher than either in learning, in vigour, in enlarged intellect and in range of thought, was ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING. With all the delicacy and feeling of the female mind, she possessed the grasp and strength of the male intellect. From the age of seventeen, when her first productions appeared, till her "Poems before Congress," written shortly before her death in 1861, her reputation was constantly growing. Her "Aurora Leigh" placed her in the highest rank of English poets. Many other names there are of females successful in the cultivation of poetry, MISS JANE INGELOW and JANE FRANCESCA, LADY WILDE, whose poems, under the pseudonym of "Speranza," abound with passionate outbursts of nationality and fine lyrical power.

Our age has not been remarkable for many dramatic productions of the highest order. Byron, Shelley, Milman, and a few others who have won names in other departments, wrote dramas which, however, never found a permanent place on the stage. MISS JOANNA BAILLIE'S dramas, especially "De Montfort," and "Plays of the Passions," are powerful compositions. CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN produced, in addition to several novels of great genius, though extravagant, the tragedy of "Bertram," which elicited high praise from Byron, and had a successful run at Drury Lane. With all its faults it is a masterly production, full of grand and powerful effects, and fine poetic language. The tragedy of "Gissipuz," by GERALD GRIFFIN, was a splendid effort of

youthful genius, and gave promise of adding a great name to dramatic literature, had life been spared to the author. THOMAS NOON TALFOURD has given us several fine tragedies, of which "Ion" is the best; and RICHARD LALOR SHIEL wrote four tragedies, of which "Evadne" was deservedly admired. No one has contributed so largely, or on the whole so effectively, to our modern drama as JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES. Over twenty plays attest his industry, amongst which "William Tell," "Virginius," "The Hunchback," and the "Wife of Mantua," are inferior to none of our times. Few writers seem to have studied human nature more deeply, and hence we find in his dramas so much real life and earnest passion. Taking as his models the Elizabethan dramatists, he has avoided their coarseness, while he emulates their strength. The comprehensive genius of LORD LYTON achieved success as a dramatist in "The Lady of Lyons" and "Richelieu." HENRY TAYLOR'S "Philip van Artevelde" is a drama, not fitted indeed for the stage, but a fine poem, blending deep dramatic interest with a thoughtful philosophy, and written in pure and nervous English. Amongst his plays "Edwin the Fair" is worthy of praise. DION BOUCICAULT has written some clever plays, of which "The Colleen Bawn" and "Aria na Pogue" are deservedly popular. Of ROBERT BROWNING, who has written several dramas, we shall speak hereafter. Comedies, interludes, farces, and the lighter productions introduced from the French school, are abundant—to live their day and disappear.

It remains to notice the poets whom we have not yet classified. Earliest of these is JAMES HOGG, better known as the Ettrick Shepherd, a poet of nature, like Burns, whose "Queen's Wake" contains some exquisite legendary pieces, of which "Kilmenny" has won universal admiration. Many others of his numerous compositions are charming for their tenderness, simplicity, and fine fancy. EDWIN ATHERSTONE is not as well known as he deserves to be. Power, vigour, splendid diction, and true poetic

feeling pervade his "Last Days of Herculaneum," "Abradates and Panthea," and "The Fall of Nineveh." THOMAS HOOD has earned immortality by his "Song of the Shirt," "The Bridge of Sighs," "Eugene Aram," and many other poems. He was at once a great master of humour and pathos, and a poet of a high order. No finer historical ballads have appeared since the days of the Stewarts than "The Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers," of WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE AYTOUN, while the "Lays of Ancient Rome," as well as some other ballads in the same style, by LORD MACAULAY, make the heart leap as to the sound of a trumpet. Normust the exquisite rendering of "Ancient Spanish Ballads, Historical and Romantic," by JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART, be forgotten. RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES (Lord Houghton) has written many elegant poems and lyrics. We cannot ignore a mass of lyrical poetry which exercised a large influence upon the political mind of Ireland during the end of the first and beginning of the second half of this century. We allude to those songs and historical ballads which appeared principally in *The Nation* newspaper, and were afterwards published in a collected form. They stirred deeply the national heart by strong appeals to the feelings, the affections, and the pride of that sensitive people—recounting many wrongs, recording past glory and present degradation in passionate and vigorous language, to which a fine poetic spirit added grace and charm. Amongst these writers, THOMAS DAVIS was the most popular and the most powerful. DENIS FLORENCE MACARTHY deserves notice for many charming lyrics, and for his masterly translations of the dramas of Calderon, "The Forging of the Anchor," by SAMUEL FERGUSON, is one of the finest and most celebrated lyrics in the language. "The Sisters of Innisfail," and other poems by AUBREY DE VERE, are full of thought and tenderness, and possess that melodious versification which characterizes Irish writers of verse. The "Anastasia" of DIGBY P. STARKEY is a remarkable poem too little known.

Under the pseudonym of OWEN MEREDITH, Robert, the only son of Lord Lytton, has gained no small reputation by his poems, which display no common power and much originality. ALEXANDER SMITH and GERALD MASSEY exhibit the force of genius struggling to light out of the gloom of poverty and the difficulties of imperfect education. MATTHEW ARNOLD, professor of poetry in the University of Oxford, has written poems of no ordinary merit, of which "Sohrab and Rustum," and "Tristram and Iseult" deserve special commendation, and as we write, ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE creates a sensation vivid, though it may not be lasting, by his poems and ballads, which, notwithstanding the gross indecency of many of them, are full of redeeming beauties. WILLIAM MORRIS has produced some striking original poems, such as "The Life and Death of Jason," "The Earthly Paradise," and "The Ghetto Saga." In him the very spirit and style of Chaucer seems to have revisited us, and he has occasionally adopted his great prototype's fine seven-lined stanza. His language, too, is nervous, simple, middle English; he paints natural objects with the pencil of a Pic-Raphaelite, and human emotion, especially the passion of love, with a manly sensuous warmth that elevates the sentiment but never offends the mind.

ROBERT BROWNING is decidedly a great thinker, but his thoughts are often too deep for clear utterance, and hence he is often obscure, if not unintelligible, and we rise at times from the speculations of his sceptical and inquisitive spirit unsatisfied and uninformed. Yet has he great imaginative power, freshness, vigour, and thorough originality. "Paracelsus," his first work, is a remarkable one, exhibiting his characteristic excellencies and faults. "Sordella" and "Pippa Passes," included in "Bells and Pomegranates," increased his reputation; but perhaps his greatest work is "The Blot in the Scutcheon," which Dickens pronounced the finest poem of the century.

Pie-eminently the poet of our day is the laureate, ALFRED TENNYSON. Forty years now before the public—for his first volume

of verse appeared in 1830—he has gradually won his way to supremacy. We do not mean to speak at any length of his numerous compositions; nor is this the time for an elaborate criticism on his poetry. We are still too near the object to estimate it justly: that duty must be left to posterity. The author of "In Memoriam," "The Princess," and "The Idylls of the King," has secured an undying fame. In language the most chaste, lofty, and yet at times severely simple, he has sung every feeling of our nature, while his verse is finished and polished to perfection, and is faultless in its rhythmical harmony. With his name we close the history of our poetry.

Let us go back to take a brief survey of the prose writers of the century. Novelists occupy a large field: their name is legion. Romances such as "The Castle of Otranto" of HORACE WALPOLE, "The Mysteries of Udolpho," and others, of MRS. ANNE RADCLIFFE, were passing away before the earnest and realistic spirit of the age, to be succeeded first by historical romances, such as those of ANNA MARIA and JANE PORTER, and then by the novels of real life, such as those of MISS JANE AUSTEN, MISS MARIA EDGEWORTH, WILLIAM GODWIN, and the clever and vivacious novels of LADY MORGAN. At last, in 1814, appeared the first of a series of novels which for nearly twenty years held men in admiration, and were destined to spread the fame of the author of the Waverley novels through the world. No writer of prose narrative ever exercised a wider influence over the public mind than SIR WALTER SCOTT, an influence not confined to his own country or age. His insight into human nature seems only second to that of Shakspeare, his narrative and descriptive powers were marvellous, and the reality of all his scenes, even when he wandered into the regions of fiction and romance, completed the spell of his enchantment. GEORGE PAYNE RAINSFORD JAMES distinguished himself by the production of a vast number of historical romances. FREDERICK MARRYATT stands at the head of naval novelists. WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH

applied great talents to the production of some able but mischievous romances, such as "Rookwood" and "Jack Sheppard," as well as some which can be entirely commended, such as "The Tower of London" and "Old Saint Paul's." ANTHONY TROLLOPE delineates with point and a pleasant vein of humour a special phase of English life. CHARLES KINGSLEY, the author of the exquisite poem "The Saint's Tragedy," has in "Alton Locke," "Westward Ho," and other novels, brought a vigorous and thoughtful genius to the exposition of some of the great social problems of the people; and CHARLES READE, in his "Never too Late to Mend," has wrought well in the same field, adding to a reputation previously gained both as a novelist and dramatist. And CAPTAIN MAYNE REID has been a large contributor of excellent novels. Congenial with these may be placed the three sisters BRONTE — CHARLOTTE, afterwards *Mrs Nichols*, EMILY JANE, and ANNE — who, under the names of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell, produced a number of popular novels, those of Charlotte, such as "Jane Eyre," "Shirley," and "Villette," display the greatest vigour and picturesque power of delineating real life and passion. The biographer of Charlotte, *MRS. MARY GASKELL*, has, in "Mary Barton," "North and South," and other novels, described the social condition of the manufacturing and labouring classes with a truth and pathos that make her works intensely and painfully interesting. *MRS CRAIK (DINAH MARIA MULOCK)*, the author of "John Halifax" and various other admirable novels, writes with strong common sense and in a fine earnest spirit, whose tendencies are always to the promotion of morality. "Adam Bede," "The Mill on the Floss," and "Silas Marner," vindicate the claim of *MRS. GEORGE H. LEWES (MISS EVANS)* to be considered one of the most vigorous novelists of this class.

And so we come to the greatest of all this school, or rather the founder of a new school, *CHARLES DICKENS*, the author of such immortal creations as *Pickwick* and *Sam Weller*, *Little Nell* and *Bill Sykes* and

Fagan, *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Pecksniff*. True to life and nature like *Fielding*, but without his coarseness, inferior perhaps in humour, but superior in tenderness, he dedicated his great talents to the exposure and reformation of moral and social errors and abuses, to denounce cant and hypocrisy, to defend the weak against the strong, the poor against the rich, and to foster a cheerful happy spirit of contentment amongst all. Throughout his writings, numerous as they are, there is not a page which a mother need withdraw from a daughter's eye. *Dickens* was the creator of a special style that has had few imitators, and not many successful ones. Nor is this to be regretted. With all its brilliancy and picturesqueness, its masterly facility of animating even insentient things, it is disfigured by the faults of exaggeration, fantastic expressions, and an iteration of byewords, and by mannerisms that offend, and it is only while under the spell of his genius that we tolerate these failings. Nearer to their common master, *Fielding*, stands *WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY*, the author of "Vanity Fair," "Pendennis," "The Newcomes," and "The Virginians." His nature was more vigorous, his style more masculine, than that of his great contemporary. If his pathos was not as highly wrought, it wanted not unaffected tenderness on occasion, and he was superior in humour. And it is to be remembered that he has left some of the happiest poetical sketches of our times.

From 1826, when his first novel of "Vivian Grey" appeared, till 1870, when he published "Lothair," *BENJAMIN DISRAELI* has been, with occasional intermissions, before the public as a novelist as well as a poet, a dramatist, and a miscellaneous writer. His literary fame will, however, rest on his novels, many of which are of a very high order. Dealing principally with political life, he invests his novels with the charms of romance, a spirit of philosophy and great sagacity, while his style is highly finished, terse, and at times epigrammatic.

Side by side with him in point of time, but ranking higher, is *LORD LYTTON*. We have

spoken of him already as a dramatist and a poet. His great and comprehensive genius displays itself more eminently still in the character of novelist. There is no phase of life, no passion or sentiment, nothing appertaining to the real or the fictitious, that his vigorous and original genius has not grasped, his learning adorned, his thought illustrated, and his brilliant fancy coloured.

Ireland produced several writers in this department who illustrated the historical events and social condition of their country so as to command high popularity. GERALD GRIFFIN, the author of the "Collegians" (dramatized by Dion Boucicault as the "Colleen Bawn"), the "Tales of the Munster Festival," &c ; JOHN and MICHAEL BANIM, whose "Tales of the O'Hara Family," and other novels, are wonderfully graphic WILLIAM CARLETON, the author of the "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," may be called the Scott of his country, whose people, scenery, and habits, he has delineated with a rare power of genius, in which humour and pathos, light and shade, are perpetually succeeding each other SAMUEL LOVER, a man of varied talents, painter, poet, musician, dramatist, and novelist, will be remembered not only for his charming lyrics, but his "Rory O'More" and other novels which reflect the humour, gaiety, fun, and tenderness of the Irish people ; and to close the list, CHARLES JAMES LEVER, who as "Harry Lornequer" has produced some of the most brilliant novels of the day. His dialogue is the sprightliest, his humour the gayest, and his merriment the most hilarious, while his powers of narrative and description are vivid and picturesque. Nor must the contributions of MRS ANNA MARIA HALL be passed without commendation. Few in our times have done more to illustrate the Irish character or Irish scenery in its varied features, and her pen has ever been employed to improve and elevate the moral and social condition of the people. JOSEPH SHERIDAN LE FANU has gained popularity by many novels which display undoubted genius, but are

occasionally disfigured by coarseness and marred by bad taste.

To France we owe the introduction of a class of novel which forms a school that has been named "The Sensational." The benefit is questionable. Professing to deal with real life, it distorts, exaggerates, and overcolours. It delights in strange surprises, discloses horrible vices, makes the depraved of either sex, and especially in high life, attractive, and is calculated to vitiate the taste and deprave the morals of our age, as much as the licentious drama of the days of the Stewarts. From this censure we must except WILLIAM WILKIE COLLINS, whose "No Name," "Man and Wife," and several other novels, are written to expose and lead to the cure of some great social errors, and show high constructive ability, great skill in depiction of characters, and inculcate sound, healthy morality.

The century has not been deficient in essayists, but we look for them chiefly in reviews and magazines. At their head stands CHARLES LAMB, whose "Essays of Elia" are the most charming for fancy, humour, tenderness, and taste that the age has produced. WILLIAM HAZLITT and THOMAS DE QUINCEY are great names as critical essayists, and so are LORD JEFFREY, SIR J. MACKINTOSH, LORD BROUGHAM, JOHN FOSTER, THOMAS CARLYLE, WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, and DAVID MASSON. Historical literature has its great representatives in HALLAM, MILMAN, MITFORD, GROTE, THIRLWALL, ALISON, TYTLER, LINGARD, and FROUDE. HERSCHEL, BREWSTER, DAVY, DALTON, BUCKLAND, HUGH MILLER, FARADAY, OWEN, FORBES, MURCHISON, and a host of other names, witness the inquiring spirit of the age in every department of science and philosophy. HALL, IRVING, CHALMERS, ALFORD, in theology. In metaphysics, STEWART, REID, and MILL. Our own language and literature has been treated, critically and historically, with great ability by HALLAM, CRAIK, and HENRY MORLEY, whose exhaustive work is not yet completed.

Earliest in the century as a master of prose stands ROBERT SOUTHY. His style is

the best which the age can produce Plain, clear, pointed, natural, and grave, whether as historian, essayist, critic, biographer, or, above all, as epistolary writer, he has no rival. One other can alone be placed beside him—beside but not above, for their styles are so essentially different that they admit of no comparison—Thomas De Quincey. A great and comprehensive genius, in many of his powers and in some of his failings resembling Coleridge, he wrote on almost every subject His collected works, comprising fourteen volumes, show the fertility of his mind, the affluence of his knowledge, the vigour, the pungency, the richness, the eloquence of a style that was thoroughly finished, which, combined with his great powers of reasoning, “form a combination which centuries may not produce, but which every age should study as one of the marvels of English literature.” The writings of THOMAS CARLYLE have attracted too large a share of public attention to be passed with a word or two. The eccentricity of his style has not a little contributed to this. Vigorous, vivid, curt, abrupt, and tinctured, affecting Germanisms to an extent that is offensive to taste and repugnant to our own tongue, he constantly carries his extravagance to burlesque, and exhibits all the contortions of a linguistic acrobat. It is only the force of his reasoning, the strong common sense of his sentiments, and the intellect and philosophy pervading all he writes, that reconcile us to a style which many censure, and we hope none will imitate.*

In nothing is the literary energy of the present day more remarkable than in period-

* “The debt due him from those who listened to the teachings of his prime, for revealing to them what sublime reserves of power even the humblest may find in manliness, sincerity, and self-reliance, can be paid with nothing short of reverential gratitude As a purifier of the sources whence our intellectual inspiration is drawn, his influence has been second only to that of Wordsworth, if even to his” “My Study Window,” by James R. Lowell, 1871.

ical literature. Reviews, whether recurring at such distant intervals as the quarterlies, or at more frequent, as the monthlies, scarcely keep pace with the growing demands of the people, which require fortnightly and weekly issues. Nay, the exigencies of the intellectual hunger can be only satisfied by daily food. Literature cheap, abundant, excellent, and unintermitting, is required and supplied. The abolition of duty on paper, and the reduction on postage, have greatly aided in the production of such literature, and the newspaper press of England has taken its rank as a great institution, civil, political, and literary A comparison between the year 1871 and the first Exhibition year (1851) shows an increase of daily papers in the United Kingdom from 18 to 120, and of other journals, from 563 to 1450. The rate of increase is therefore most in the daily issues In the distribution England has 1112 papers, Wales has 53, only one of which is published daily, Scotland has 131, and Ireland 138 London alone publishes 261 papers It may thus be safely asserted that the ablest discussions on every subject are now placed daily within the reach of every one at a price which the poorest can pay To estimate the enormous influence that such an engine exercises over the nation is impossible, while the cheap and admirable educational works, such as those of the Chambers, Cassell & Co., and others, prepare the masses to appreciate subjects of science and of literature which a century ago were but little understood by the class above them.

In fine, whatever may be the characteristic excellencies of the past ages of our literature, it may confidently be affirmed that the age of Victoria yields not to any of them. Rich in the accretions of all, it applies to these the resources of its own genius, the stores of its own intellect, the achievements of its own science, and the rapid and illimitable diffusion of its thought, to make a literature of which England may well be proud.

